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Rev. W. E. Caldwell
128.

May 5 he writes of his pleas
lodgings with Mr. Plaskett, a m
chant living near the Washing
monument, and the attendance
the English delegates. "On Sun
g I heard Mr. Newton
reet. I was delighted bey
. He is a fine-looking m
xty, above the middle s
ine voice, with the dee
ons I ever heard; simple
to a high degree. In
n I tried to preach in Eut
g over the ashes of Ash
nory, but their mantles
on me. At five I heard
Newton preach to about ten th
sand in one of the public squares.
the crowd were Clay, Preston
many other distinguished men.
Monday the Bishops delivered t
quadrennial address. It was go
very good. On the same day th
was a Whig convention—the gr
est of the kind ever holden in
United States. There were spee
from the most distinguished me
the nation—Clay, Webster and
ers. I saw the procession and h
a little of the speaking. There
greater amount of hospitality
than I have seen in my travels.

"*May* 12.—I took tea with
Newton at Mr. Tiffany's. He i
the social circle all that you co
wish; and, what is best of all, he
mixes true religion with everything

1878. Sept. 17.

1837
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THE

METHODIST PREACHER:

OR

MONTHLY SERMONS

FROM

LIVING MINISTERS.

EDITED BY

EBENEZER IRESON,

MINISTER OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

Go—into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.—CHRIST.

Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine.—PAUL.

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SERMON I.

BY REV. SAMUEL LUCKEY, D. D.
Albany, N. Y.

AN ENCOURAGEMENT TO FAITHFULNESS IN RECLAIMING THOSE WHO HAVE ERRED FROM THE TRUTH.

JAMES v. 19, 20.

Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.

THE term sinner, in this text, evidently means one who has known the way of the Lord, and, in a degree, backslidden from him, and to 'convert the sinner from the error of his way,' is to exert an influence which shall be successful in his recovery from his wanderings. As a motive to influence us in this good work, it is declared, 'that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.' How vast then is the consideration to induce us to endeavor the conversion of *many!*

1. WE STATE, AS OUR FIRST PROPOSITION, THAT THERE IS A POSSIBILITY AND DANGER OF BACKSLIDING FROM GOD.

I do not design in discussing this proposition to enter into a formal defence of the doctrine it involves, but shall assume the truth of it as evident from the language of the text. I will only remark, that by a possibility and danger of backsliding, I mean a possibility and danger of so backsliding, as *finally to lose our souls.* If I am correct in supposing that the term '*sinner* means *backslider*,' which accords with the views of the most approved expounders of the text, it is evident that his apostacy may be *final*, or to 'convert him from the error of his way' would *not* be to 'save a soul from *death*,' in the sense of the term as it is here used.

The practical use to be made of this subject is, to encourage that labor of love toward those who show signs of wandering from the right way, which will be most likely to rescue them from final ruin. In order to this, it is important to inquire into some of the principal causes of backsliding, and the circumstances which usually attend it in its various degrees.

I say those who *show signs* of wandering from the right way, because the language of the text obviously refers to those who are under the watch-care of their brethren, rather than those who have been 'led forth with the workers of iniquity,' and excluded from the 'communion of the saints.' This thought is of importance in directing us with respect to the proper *time*, as well as the *manner*, of performing the duty suggested in the text.

1. The apostle evidently had his eye upon a state of society, growing out of the prevalence of backslidings, alike derogatory to the honor of religion, and detrimental to its prosperity. Such a state of society it appears has existed, and, indeed, did exist at a very early period after churches began to be planted by the first publishers of the gospel. Of this we are assured by consulting the revelation made through the Apostle John to the seven churches in Asia Minor. To one of these the Searcher of hearts said, 'I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.' To another, 'I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to cast a stumbling-block before the children of Israel—also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes, which thing I hate! In the same manner a third was thus reproved:—'Notwithstanding, I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce my servants.' A fourth was accused of having 'a name that they lived,' while they were '*dead;*' and a fifth, of boasting that they were 'rich, and increased in goods, and had need of nothing,' while at the same time they knew not that they were 'wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.'

Very similar language is employed by the Apostles. Thus, in the epistle to the Romans, their mutual animosities, in which they indulged too freely, are constantly held up in the language of severe and just reproof; and in conclusion, the writer said, 'Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions, contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.' Also to the Corinthians he said, 'It hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, that there are contentions among you.'—'Every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ.' Hence he proceeded to add, 'Whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?' Hence also in his second epistle to this church he said, 'I fear, lest when I come, I shall not find you such as I would, and that I shall be found unto you such as ye would not; lest there be debates, envyings, wraths, strifes, backbitings, whisperings, swellings, tumults; and lest, when I come again, God will humble me among you, and that I shall bewail many that have sinned already.' To the Galatian church the same Apostle said, 'I stand in doubt of you.' 'Where is the blessedness ye spake of?' 'Who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth?' 'Are ye so foolish?'

having begun in the spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?' 'Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?' 'A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.' The Ephesians he exhorted, to be no more 'tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive.' And to the Colossians he addressed the following admonition:—'Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ?'

2. This strain of admonition and rebuke, which is found running through all the epistolary writings of the New Testament, teaches us that many of the causes of backsliding are of a general character, and affect whole communities in proportion as they are sanctioned and encouraged by the members which compose them. We assert not indeed that all who belong to such communities necessarily fall into spiritual decline in consequence of the evils introduced and fomented by individuals. We mean only to say, that such evil-workers, are 'roots of bitterness,' every where 'springing up' to trouble God's people, and thereby '*many* are defiled,' many of the weak are turned out of the way, the zeal and ardor of many are abated, and thus the whole body suffers.

The truth of this observation will appear evident if we advert briefly to the nature, the operations, and the effect of the evils above noticed,' and which are so clearly pointed out in the scriptures, as causes of frequent backslidings.

Of their nature, we may remark, that they are suited to those affections and passions of the soul which are most susceptible of a wrong bias, and least subject to the control of reason or of conscience. Men have a natural inclination to be *pleased*. But the doctrines of the cross are calculated to mortify the pride of the heart, as they require that we should deny ourselves, take up the cross, and follow Christ. From this humiliating course we naturally shrink with aversion, and incline to substitute some plausible fallacy, calculated more to *please* than to *profit*. We say then, with respect to these causes of backsliding, that they are peculiarly adapted to the work of ensnaring the unwary, because they are suited to those affections and passions which they are naturally most inclined to cherish and follow.

The same is true of their operations. Some people, for instance, have a taste for that which is externally graceful and splendid; others admire that which is grave and profound; others, again, are never pleased unless you can entertain them with something novel, eccentric, or satirical. Besides these, there are many over whose feelings their early prejudices have a potent influence; and many others who are naturally ambitious of worldly honor and magnificent display. These, with a fine house of worship, a numerous and respectable congregation, ample funds, and a minister in whose popularity their own pride is every where flattered and inflamed, think

they are 'rich, and increased in goods, and have need of nothing.' Now while truth is *one*, and can edify and comfort those only whose souls are conformed to it, and while the propensities of the human heart are so extremely various and changeable, and error and imposture are ever on the move to meet and accommodate them, these elements of discord, which are every where to be found, will operate to a greater or less extent.

In some instances, the very things which God in infinite wisdom and goodness has ordained for the edification of the church, are made by the perverseness of the people, occasions of backsliding. Such was the case in the Corinthian Church. Among the ministers of Christ there were 'diversities of gifts.' One was peculiarly qualified 'for a defence of the gospel.' Another was made a 'son of thunder,' that he might pour 'the terrors of the law' into the ears of the guilty. And a third was endowed with feelings and organs calculated to soothe the afflicted, and encourage the desponding. But instead of availing themselves of these advantages, severally to build themselves up upon the faith of the gospel, each passionately praised the preacher whose talents best suited his taste, and set himself to depreciate the labors and destroy the influence of others. Thus these instruments of their edification, were made, by their perverseness, occasions of mutual dissensions and unprofitable controversies. And thus it continues to be among all such as regard more the gratification of their inclinations than the edification of their souls.

3. We have to remark, however, that these causes of backsliding have generally been introduced and promoted by individuals of ambitious views and feelings, who have regarded more their own aggrandizement than the glory of God and the good of souls. Such were those of the Church in Pergamos, who held the doctrine of Balaam and the Nicolaitanes; and Jezebel of Thyatira, who called herself a prophetess; and in that character was suffered to teach and seduce the people. Such also were the numerous false teachers who infested the Church in the days of the Apostles. Their character, as drawn in the scriptures, is by no means equivocal. Their object appears to have been to gain the affection of the people to themselves, and to profit by the conquest. This led them to assail and traduce the apostles and other faithful ministers of Christ, and to make high pretensions of regard for the feelings, the rights, and the prosperity of the people, as also to shake their confidence in those institutions in which they had been nurtured and edified in the infancy of their religion. Having no object but to gain admirers and make proselytes, they were not at all restrained by that regard for truth which binds men of integrity, and therefore they gave unlimited scope to their imaginations in perverting truth; and accommodating themselves to all kinds of prejudices and predilections. If it were to be circumcised, that the offence of the cross might cease, this liberty, under a gospel of perfect freedom, they could not deny any who might desire it, nay, to please their influ-

ential Jewish neighbors, they could even constrain those over whom they had influence to consent to this rite. If it were to conciliate the Gentiles, and obtain their favorable regards, a Jezebel could be encouraged, with fair words and soft speeches, to seduce the servants of God to 'eat things offered to idols.' Thus they labored to disaffect the people, and draw them away from the gospel through which they had been brought to the knowledge of God, and the ministers through whose instrumentality this glorious work had been effected in them. Who can estimate the extent of mischief done to a promiscuous and unsuspecting community, by designing men of this description, with the unbounded licentiousness of speech in which they allow themselves to indulge? The express language of scripture is, that 'certain men crept in unawares, ungodly men, turning the grace of God into lasciviousness;' 'presumptuous' were they and 'self-willed,' 'speaking evil of the things which they understood not.' They were 'murmurers,' and 'complainers,' speaking 'great swelling words,' 'walking after their own lusts,' 'having men's persons in admiration, because of advantage.' Of these the apostle Paul early admonished the Ephesian Church. 'Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.' And to this class of men, he no doubt alludes, when he says, 'I would they were even cut off which trouble you'.

This, let it be remarked, is the language of prediction. As it was in the days of the apostles, so it is signified that it would be through succeeding ages of the Church. And so it has come to pass. Men of ambitious minds have stolen into the Church, and figured for popularity and distinction on sacred ground. We have seen them bending all their energies to gain the applause of men, and revelling in the spirit of self complacency, as they have succeeded in the single object of their pursuit. Whether it was to be famed for exerting a controlling influence over others in directing the affairs of the Church, or for being possessed of splendid talents, and admired as orators, *self* was seen in all they said and did. To effect their purposes, they must stand and act *alone*. It was not enough that a good thing should be accomplished, but *they* must have the credit of it. So that for the glory of God and the advancement of his cause, they never appeared to entertain the least concern, only in so far as any thing connected with these high and potent interests could be rendered subservient to their own ambitious thirst for the praise of men. These have been so numerous, that scarcely a community of christians can be found, however few in number, and unpretending in their claims, among whom some of this character have not obtruded themselves. And as they ever shape their course to bring themselves into notice, the tendency of all their labors and efforts is to create divisions and party feelings among unsuspecting brethren, by exciting sympathy in every case in which they pretend to be neglected or ill used, as drawing them into some erratic measure, whose only merit is that *they* have projected it, and its success will redound to their

praise. Thus, as soon as they can produce an excitement about themselves, and enlist the feelings of others on any pretence they may invent, they cannot be spoken of among brethren in the sober terms of composing relative merit, and rendering to every man his due; but all who come within the range of the excitement must be partizans in their cause, and join their admirers in trumpeting their praise, or consent to be branded as enemies and persecutors. Such persons occasion immense mischief in whatever character they act, whether as ministers or private members of the Church. Wherever they go they spread a pestilential influence around them. The mutual confidence of the inexperienced is weakened; the unsuspecting are arrayed against each other in a useless and destructive warfare; and divisions, animosities, and ultimate backslidings follow in their train. He must have been a very superficial observer upon the causes which have contributed to the prevalence of backsliding among professors, who has not been able to trace much of it to the agency of men of this description, who have crept into the Church unawares, and in that sacred relation excited collisions and feuds alike destructive to the peace of the brotherhood and the piety of individuals.

4. Besides those who have crept in unawares, there are others who come into the Church under a share of religious influence, but who, by disregarding the exhortation of the apostles, to 'leave the principles of the doctrine of Christ,' and 'go on to perfection,' allow their latent propensities to obtain strength and gain an ascendency over them. They may remain in fellowship with the people of God, and be unsuspected of secret defection, except by the eye of religious scrutiny, while nothing occurs to rouse the serpent which coils about their hearts. They may indeed, and often do, distinguish themselves for their zeal in such matters relating to the affairs of the church as happen to accord with their feelings, or tend to sustain their opinions and gratify their ambition. But when an occasion occurs, calculated to develope the lurking evil of their hearts, it will then appear what is their true moral state, and the real cause of their evident aversion to spiritual things, long noticed and deplored by their christian friends. I will say here, that those who backslide after they experience justification, usually fall by the sin to which they have been most addicted, or to which they are constitutionally, or in consequence of their education, trade or profession, most inclined. Hence the apostle exhorts us to 'lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us.' In many backsliders we may trace the workings, of an indulged propensity, prejudice or habit, as the single incipient cause of their departure from God.

Among these we reckon such as indulge in the love of the world. How they may increase their worldly possessions is the question which chiefly occupies their thoughts. They seem in many cases never to have apprehended that this inordinate desire to 'lay up treasure upon earth' is *sinful*, or that there is any truth in the declaration,

'If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him;' and consequently they go on, year after year, professing to be the disciples of Christ, and cherishing the spirit of the world in their hearts, without any apparent concern as to the consequences of this fearful incongruity, upon which the scriptures have pronounced in such unequivocal and alarming terms. Their neglect of duty, and, not unfrequently, their violation of moral principle, in their toil and strife for gain—their litigations with others, and even with their brethren, when there is not enough depending to compensate for one hour's loss of peace occasioned by the conflict—their habitual neglect to contribute according to their ability for the support of charitable and religious institutions—the spirit with which they treat the admonitions of their brethren on these subjects—and, especially, their ceaseless murmurings and other expressions of disquietude at worldly losses and disappointments—these, and a thousand other things of a similar kind, give sad evidence that the spirit of the world reigns in their hearts, to the exclusion of all concern for the more important interests of their souls. Now when the temporal interests of such happen to come in direct collision with their religious privileges, who has not witnessed how recklessly they can sacrifice the latter in subserviency to the former? If they think they have been injured in their worldly interests by a brother, and prompt satisfaction be not rendered on an appeal to the Church, according to their own views of the case, they will hastily withdraw from the privileges of the house of God, and not unfrequently indulge in bitter complaints against all they once professed to love and esteem. Could this *ever* be the case only where the love of the world has long had dominion in the heart?

An undue self-esteem is another incipient cause of backsliding. Many there are who value themselves on account of certain peculiar notions they have adopted, and their rigid adherence to them. With them nothing is right but what is in exact accordance with their views. They are bold and confident in asserting their opinions, and rude and impertinent in obtruding them upon others. And their censures are severe and bitter against all who happen to differ from them. Esteeming themselves better than others, and valuing their own performances more highly than any thing they hear, they soon become dissatisfied with the most instructive and edifying gifts of the Church, and withdraw themselves from the regular means of grace, that they may have an opportunity to gratify the pride of their hearts without restraint. They may indeed affect a great share of zeal; but their total want of Christian meekness evinces the fallacy of their pretensions. Beginning in the spirit of self-esteem, they become dictatorial, self-willed and censorious. And denouncing, as inconsistent with religious freedom, whatever does not admit their will as the will of action, they spurn the restraints of wholesome discipline, abandon the communion of saints, and give full scope to their unbridled inclinations. How many have fallen in this way? and how many others are treading in their footsteps!

It will naturally occur to you, my brethren, that the love of pleasure and of indolence—a spirit of anger and of volatility—and many other propensities to which we are liable, become direct causes of backsliding to those who indulge in them. But we have not time to dwell upon them. The point to be kept in view is, that a constant and increasing religious influence in the soul is necessary to guard it against ultimate apostacy; because in the absence of such religious influence, evil propensities will gain an ascendency, and, in time, break forth in all the malignity of their pestiferous sway. No matter to what propensity we may be most subject, whether pride, or anger, or self-will, the love of the world, of pleasure, or of ease; if nourished in our hearts—if not overcome by the power of grace, it will at last overcome us. If we will be useful then, in saving any from thus backsliding, we must keep in mind the causes in which it commences, that we may timely arrest its progress, and rescue the wanderers from the snare of the enemy.

5. To know the extent of the deleterious *effects* produced by these causes, we must bear in mind that they are of a diffusive nature, and extend their deadly influence beyond the individuals with whom they originate. When a person of an ambitious spirit alienates himself from the church, he usually becomes bitter in his feelings against his former brethren, and discovers much of the spirit of our common adversary in endeavoring to draw all he can into the snare with him, reckless of consequences to themselves or the cause. Nay, in this he seems to take a kind of triumphant pleasure; by misrepresentations, detraction, and other mischievous devices, he is ready, whenever an opportunity offers, to create divisions and strife among brethren, weaken their confidence in each other, and excite in their bosoms a spirit of opposition and ill-will, under the influence of which all their spiritual enjoyments wither like mown flowers under a tropical sun. If any are so unhappy as to lend an incautious ear to the affected censures and complaints of such, and allow their feelings to become enlisted for them, they will soon find their own peace of mind destroyed by it, and, as it often occurs, when persons of this description can succeed in arraying whole societies in parties, against each other, many engage so vehemently in the conflict as to throw aside all the restraints of reason and religion, and pass the bounds of recovery themselves. Thus, the apostacy of one who has had influence in the church, ends in the ruin of many. Who of us, my brethren, and especially such of us as have labored extensively in the work of the Lord, has not witnessed the melancholy effects of such disorders and conflicts? If we cast our thoughts for a moment over the field of our labors, how many may we call to mind who were once eminent for their piety and zeal, but who have fallen in precisely this way? How many societies may we think of, which were once flourishing and prosperous; but they have been torn and convulsed by internal commotions, and are now dreary and desolate! What occasion has been given to infidels and scoffers to triumph! How have the hands of the pious been weakened by

such scenes of turmoil! And how much scandal have they occasioned to the Church?

We pretend not indeed that the Church is backslidden. Her statistics, and the acknowledged increasing spirituality of the main body of her membership, prove the reverse to be the case. But we look with deep concern upon the numerous backslidings which yearly occur, and are disposed to inquire, what might not the prosperity of the cause have been, had all these been prevented? Is it too much to suppose, that if all 'who have named the name of Christ' had been careful to 'depart from all iniquity,' if none had backslidden, the mighty influence which they would have exerted, would have shaken the world, and infidelity and irreligion would ere now have slumbered in eternal silence. O, my brethren, the thought of what would be the probable consequence of the uniform perseverance of all who profess piety, is an overwhelming one, and ought to engage us to exert our utmost endeavors to rescue, by all possible means, such as we see wandering from God. 'Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way, shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.'

II. WE SHALL PROCEED TO CONSIDER THE DUTY SUGGESTED IN THE TEXT.

This duty is, to endeavor by all possible means, to rescue those who 'err from the truth.' Let it be observed that we have proceeded on the ground that every degree of backsliding, from the first aberrations of the heart to the out-breaking of sin, is considered as embraced in 'erring from the truth,' and consequently, whatever may have a tendency to save a brother in the earliest stages of spiritual decline, though the symptoms of it may scarcely be discernible, is embraced in the duty. We will say then, that it implies faithfulness in all those obligations into which we have solemnly entered with each other, in our covenant vows, as ministers and members of the church of Christ. The language of this sacred compact is such as ought always deeply to impress our minds. 'A company of men having the form, and seeking the power of Godliness, united in order to pray together, to receive the word of exhortation, and to watch over one another in love, that they may help each other to work out their salvation. If then, it is a duty to endeavor the conversion of those who have never made a profession of religion, how much more so to 'watch over one another in love,' and exert our utmost efforts to save our brethren who may at any time show signs of alienation from God and his cause? There is, moreover, this consideration, to bind us to the latter duty—our vows are upon us, and they cannot be broken with impunity. In this view of the subject, I earnestly solicit a serious attention to the duty under consideration.

1. In order to the successful discharge of this duty, its nature and importance must be duly considered. And perhaps this was never more necessary than it is at the present time, and in our own Church. While we labor incessantly for the salvation of sinners—while those labors are crowned with success, and new and flourishing societies are springing up in every direction—and while we add thousands to our

numbers every year, do we apply ourselves with equal zeal to the work of saving those in the Church who 'err from the truth?' Do not many, by our neglect, it is to be feared, fall wholly away? I say not this by way of rebuke. I know there have been causes calculated to lead to such a result. But these causes, though they may palliate, cannot remedy the evil. If by any means we have been remiss in this matter, it becomes us the more seriously to consider it, and the more diligently to attend to that part of our duty, which, through inadvertence or otherwise, we have neglected.

I say there have been causes calculated to produce such a result.—These we should do well to consider, in order to guard against the remote influence they may yet insensibly exert upon us. When our fathers in the Gospel commenced their work in this country, they had no large societies to superintend—no old difficulties to settle—no backsliders to admonish—no wanderers to reclaim. Their main business was to warn sinners 'to flee from the wrath to come,' and to teach inquirers 'the way of salvation.' The evils and labors which multiply upon our hands, as the work extends, were so inconsiderable at the commencement, and of so gradual a growth, after they began to exist, that they were scarcely to be seen among the objects which engaged the attention of our venerable predecessors. But the impulse of their labors upon all descriptions of sinners, resulting in successive revivals in every direction, and spreading until revival met revival, has excited our admiration, and inspired us with an intense desire, closely to imitate their example. With an eye constantly upon their labors and success, and feelings alive to imitation, it is natural that we should think more of success in that part of our work which most resembles theirs; and, by consequence, in the same degree, lose sight of that which did not come, or came but partially within the range of their labors. To this observation we may add, that the views and feelings of aged Christians, who witnessed the early labors of the first ministers in our Church, and the revivals of those days, sometimes have an influence in this matter. They are ever pointing the minds of their young brethren to those scenes, and keep them on the stretch for a continued succession of similar ones, by holding up their hands and encouraging their hearts, so long as they see them wholly bent upon this single object; but if at any time they are called to the patient work of endeavoring to reclaim the backslider, and to restore confidence among alienated brethren, they do not find the same cordial co-operation in it, at least by many.—Some, indeed, go far to check their feelings, by insinuating their want of ardor and zeal in promoting revivals, when their attention is at all turned to any other subject. These circumstances have had a tendency to cause this duty to be too much neglected.

To these we may add also, that the nature of this work is less calculated to engage our feelings, than is that of laboring to bring in those who have never professed piety. Awakened sinners are tender, and receive our admonitions and instructions kindly. Every thing we have to do in leading them to Christ, accords with the best feelings of the heart; and the pleasures which attend their con-

version, and in which all who are devoutly engaged in a work of revival, largely partake, are a thousand rewards for all their labor and toil. But the work to be performed in endeavoring to reclaim the backslider, differs materially from this. They who are conscious of the internal workings of 'an evil heart of unbelief,' are in a state to repel admonition, and to treat their best friends as their worst enemies. The pride of heart which is always incorporated with a spirit of backsliding, renders those who are exercised by it, much more tender of their reputation, than of their own spiritual welfare. Hence, when their defection becomes evident, and a brother, tremblingly alive to their danger, ventures to suggest his concern for them, especially if there be occasion to call their attention to any improprieties of conduct, as the grounds of his labor with them, they are exceedingly prone to receive it unkindly, and to cherish a spirit of bitter malignity against such a friend. This is seen to be so frequently the case, that it requires, no common share of christian fortitude to perform a duty so ungratefully received, and often, so painful in its consequences. If, therefore, we would be successful in it, we must take a deliberate view of it in all its bearings; and without reference to what may be the consequence to ourselves in unsuccessful cases, we must apply ourselves to the work generally, having respect only to our recompense of reward in heaven.

2. If we would succeed in this work, we must exercise the moral courage to withstand the artifices of those who labor to lead the unwary astray. When false teachers obtrude themselves among the people of God, and endeavor to seduce them—when evil workers spring up, and cause divisions, and exert themselves to make parties and draw disciples after them—when efforts are made by any to turn away the hearts of the people from the simplicity of the Gospel, under any, or all of these and the like circumstances, the duty under consideration plainly requires that we should promptly, though in the spirit of meekness, interpose our influence to rescue the weak and inexperienced from their artifices. In like manner we shall often find that the same object will require promptness in excluding persons of a certain description of character from the Church. I say persons of a certain description of character; for I am not an advocate for hasty and liberal expulsions; nor can I be, without evident incongruity of sentiment, and violation of principle. There is danger of being influenced in this work, more by feeling than by a sober conviction of what is necessary for the purity of the Church, and the honor of the cause. This is especially the case with those members who become partizans in any cause in which the standing of others is involved. But the principle I maintain, is, that when a person gives full evidence of wishing to retain his place in the Church, only for the purpose of exerting an influence to disaffect and corrupt its members—that he has no desire to be benefited by its institutions, or pleased in witnessing the spiritual prosperity of others—and when there remains no reasonable probability that his continuance will have a tendency to restore him—then it becomes

duty, however we may be connected with him as a man, unitedly to say, 'he hath no more place among us. We have delivered our own souls.' But this painful work should be decided upon and executed by the church with the same views and feelings which we may suppose would influence a man, having a hand or a foot diseased, to decide upon amputation—only after every effort to effect a cure has failed, and given place to a sober conviction, that to retain it in connexion with the body is dangerous. For though it should not be deemed the most likely cause to save the excluded individual, yet it is essential in many instances, for the salvation of others, whose peace and piety are usually more or less affected by their connexion with him, so long as he continues to exert his pestiferous influence in the bosom of the Church.

4. This duty requires that we be faithful toward each other, according to our covenant vows. By these we are bound to pray one for another, and watch over each other in love. If we are particular to pray for our brethren in our closets, and in our social intercourse, often to unite together in supplicating a throne of grace, it will have an effect constantly to impress our minds with a deep and sincere regard for their spiritual prosperity; it will prepare us to watch all opportunities to do them good, and it will give them to entertain that veneration and regard for us, which will cause our very life and conduct to throw a restraining influence about them, which will tend to check the risings of corrupt desire, and rescue them from the snares of the enemy. These are some of the advantages of our covenant relation, in which this duty is certainly implied. All this is clearly inferrible from those passages of Scripture in which Christians are instructed to build themselves up upon their most holy faith, to exhort one another, and to labor together for the edifying of the body of Christ. This work may not indeed be deemed as splendid and imposing as that of bringing back wanderers who have gone far away; for the extent of the effect of it may never be known in this world. But when we consider how many seeds of apostacy it is calculated to subdue, which, if not thus early checked, would grow up to maturity—how much reproach and scandal, which their unrestrained growth would have occasioned, is prevented by it—how much more effectually the evil is remedied at this incipient stage, than it can be afterwards—we shall be satisfied that much of the duty suggested in the text, is embraced in the faithfulness of christians toward each other according to their covenant engagements.

5. The duty implies a faithful and friendly course of labor with those who transgress openly, indulge in sinful words and tempers, or habitually neglect the means of grace. When we witness any of these in a brother who has once been zealous and ardent in the cause of religion, he should become an object of our special solicitude and care. His case is a deeply interesting one, and needs to be tenderly treated; because, under such circumstances he will be likely, for want of the degree of restraining grace which one in such a state must be supposed not to have, at our first approach to repel us,

however kindly we may accost him. If we would succeed in our labor with him, we must take all this into the account, and prepare ourselves against being discouraged by such an event. We must make due allowance for his words and temper at such a time, remembering that the heart must be tendered and softened, before it can be formed to a right mould; and if we allow ourselves to seize an unadvised word which he may drop in the moment of excitement, and which might be expected, considering him in a backslidden state, and thus turn from him to make what he may say an additional cause of complaint against him, without an effort to overcome his opposition of feeling, we need not hope to be successful in our work. It would be contrary to the order of things, because it would be to require that he give evidence by his words and temper of being exercised by the spirit of the Gospel in order to render him a proper subject of our labors, and care to *restore* him to such a spirit. Let us remember, then, that we must patiently bear such repulses, and take no advantage of them, as it must defeat our object, both by discouraging further effort in his case, and multiplying obstacles against his return. There are those indeed, who are extremely forward to rebuke all whom they consider as going astray.—Without any care to know precisely the state of the case, they fall abruptly upon them in harsh and vindictive terms, as though they had been guilty of some high personal offence against them, sometimes magnifying the causes of offence, and ever adding to them vague reports and invidious insinuations, as though they had a desire to aggravate the case as much as possible. It must be evident that such a course is calculated to produce a most unfavorable effect. One toward whom it is practised, will readily imbibe an impression that his admonishers have no sincere regard for his welfare, but are proud of an opportunity of commending themselves, by exposing his errors and infirmities, and are equally reckless of his feelings and his reputation. In this momentous work, all signs of such feelings and motives must be avoided. We must convince the offending brother that we love him, tenderly love him, though we may hate 'the garmeut spotted by the flesh.' We must show him by all we say and do, that one object alone influences our whole conduct towards him, and that object is his salvation. This we must do, not in the cold terms of an affected friendship, but from a heart deeply imbued with the spirit of benevolence and brotherly love, for without this, the workings of a secret self-complacency will betray themselves, and have a tendency rather to disgust than reform him.

In a word, brethren, this duty must be performed in the spirit of forbearance. We must not allow ourselves to be easily diverted from our object. If reviled, we must entreat. If driven from one point, seize upon another. As a father would pursue a prodigal son, and endeavor by admonitions and entreaties to effect his return, so we must apply ourselves to win over the feelings of our alienated brethren, while there is hope in their case. Is it not too often the case that those who fall into sin are hastily forsaken and abandoned to the solitude of their own troubled hearts, in a manner to leave an

impression that they have no share in the affectionate regards of their former friends? And is it not probable that there are many who remain wanderers from God, and beyond the range of the gospel's influence, in consequence of this impression, who might, by a course of kind and affectionate treatment, be induced to return to their father's house? O brethren, has not this duty been too much neglected? Have we not been too easily prevailed upon by our feelings to give up backsliders as lost, without fully satisfying ourselves respecting what might be done in their case, by a little more zeal and perseverance? It is often alleged in excuse for neglecting them, that they have been guilty of great improprieties of conduct. This, in some instances, may be evidence that our endeavors to recover them would be useless; in many others it is not. Peter was highly criminal in denying his Lord; and his profane asseverations greatly aggravated his guilt. Ordinarily, these would be quoted as evidence of such extreme wickedness as would justify an abandonment of any who could indulge in them to the error of their way. But Peter was reclaimed. And how many others might be, if all Christians were faithful in this duty?

III. WE SHALL NOW ATTEND BRIEFLY TO THE MOTIVE HELD OUT IN THE TEXT TO ENCOURAGE US IN THIS DUTY.

This motive is contained in these words—'he shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.' It embraces two distinct items, which require to be separately considered.

1. 'He shall save a soul from death.' The plain meaning of this is, he shall be instrumental in saving a soul from hell. When we contemplate the worth of an immortal soul, and the eternity of misery to which it is liable, this is certainly a motive of vast importance. Besides, as it will no doubt appear in the great day, when the books shall be opened, to both the saved and those who have been instrumental in their salvation, precisely how far the influence of the latter has been instrumental in rescuing the former, this labor of love will be a source of exquisite and unceasing satisfaction to both, while they dwell together in heaven. 'They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmanent; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever.'

2. 'And shall hide a multitude of sins.' This requires a more critical examination. We will say in the first place, that the common, unstudied construction which some appear to give to the passage is, that the sins of the reclaimed backslider, being pardoned, will never be permitted to appear to his mortification and reproach. If this were all that is implied in the text, it would exceedingly weaken the force of the motive; for it cannot be deemed a matter of great interest to be instrumental in barely thus covering up the sins of an individual, when neither his salvation, nor that of any one else is in any way affected by it. But the principle is not correct. The very conversion alluded to in the text, admits of no such covering up of sin, but requires directly the reverse. 'He that covereth his sins shall not prosper; but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.' 'If we say that we have no sin, we

deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.' If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.' Nothing can be more absurd than to attempt to reclaim a backslider by teaching him to avoid confessing his sins. This, the pride of his own heart will always prompt him to.—Our work is to endeavor to subdue that pride, and to prevail on him, in the spirit of contrition and humility, to confess and forsake his sins, that he may receive pardon. Not indeed that he is to number and name *all* his sins ; this we presume is not implied in the terms of confession. But inasmuch as he has been wont, in the pride of his heart, to excuse or justify them, he must now openly confess his criminality in them. And, moreover, there are many sins more commonly indulged in by the backslider than others, which a spirit of contrition will especially incline him to confess openly. Such are his groundless jealousies, secret enmity and heartburnings against his brethren ; his ungrateful returns for their kindness in warning and admonishing him ; the causeless broils he has occasioned, and particularly those acts which have brought reproach upon the cause of Christ. These, together with whatever he may have done to injure others, whose grievances he cannot redress without humble acknowledgments of the wrong he has done them, his conversion will have a tendency rather to disclose than conceal. Nor is it true that the sins of the backslider will be covered, according to this interpretation, in the day of judgment ; for it is expressly said in the Scriptures, that 'God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil ;' and also, 'there is nothing covered that shall not be revealed.' Sins which have been pardoned, will not indeed be brought in the judgment to condemn those who have committed them, but rather to exhibit the plenitude of grace and mercy through which they have been forgiven. This will be calculated to inspire the redeemed with a sense of their vast obligations to their glorious Redeemer, and with a spirit of humility before him. In this view of the subject, it would be absurd even to desire that the sins of any should be hid in the manner above described ; and, consequently there is no motive, according to this interpretation of the text, to induce us to labor for it.

3. Divines and theologians who have attended more critically to the subject, have, for the most part, pursued a different track. It appears to be a prevailing opinion among them, that by 'a multitude of sins' is meant the sins of the reclaimed backslider, or the one who is instrumental in reclaiming him, or both. In a compilation of critical and explanatory annotations, designed for the use of families, Dr. Hammond's note on this passage is introduced as a satisfactory explanation of it. He says, 'Here is a double encouragement to excite our charity, in order to the conversion of an erring brother. 1. The advantage to the receiver ; to wit, *the saving of his soul :* And 2. To the instrument himself ; to wit, *the hiding a multitude of his sins.* Bishop Atterbury and Dr. Scott* are quoted as contending that the *covering a multitude of sins*, includes also, that the *pious action* of which the Apostle speaks, engages God to look with greater indulgence on

*See Dr. Adam Clark's notes on the passage.

the character of the person that performs it, and to be *less severe in marking what he has done amiss.*' In a sermon preached by a late worthy minister* at one of the principal seats of theological literature in our country, and published by request, both in a periodical of distinguished claims, and in a pamphlet form, we find this remark.—'The second topic of encouragement in this duty is, *the hiding, or pardon of a multitude of sins* :—of sins as committed against God ; and that in two respects ; of sins in him who is converted from the error of his way, and of sins in him who is the happy instrument of such conversion.' From these facts it is inferred that this mode of interpretation is very generally adopted as correct. A few reflections, however, will convince us, it is presumed, that it is liable to many and weighty objections.

4. It involves, in the first place, principles contrary to the plainest doctrines of the Gospel. That any good acts of ours should have the effect to absolve us from our sins, or to expiate the guilt of another, is absurd and anti-evangelical. In the truly evangelical language of the articles of our Church, 'We are accounted righteous before God, only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, by faith, and not for our own works or deservings :—Wherefore, that we are justified by faith only, is a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort.' Moreover, he who labors for the conversion of another, is supposed to have been converted himself, and to act under the influence of justifying faith, of which such labor is the fruit, and in no sense the producing cause. It has of course, nothing to do with effecting his own pardon, and consequently this cannot be a motive to induce him to endeavor the conversion of others. To this we may add, that according to this interpretation we cannot perceive any advantage to the converted sinner, arising from what is contained in this member of the text ; for the whole that it implies is embraced in the previous clause, 'he shall save a soul from death,' and this remains as only a weak and unmeaning tautology, of far less force as a motive, than the section in which the interpretation supposes it to be contained.

The interpretation, we may be allowed to add, is as dangerous as it is absurd. It would be far better to suppose that it has no meaning distinct from what is embraced in the preceding clause, than to attach such a meaning to it. If our good actions be capable of covering sins in the light of *atonement* or *expiation*, then may we exclude Christ from the economy of salvation. And to what fatal errors and delusions would this lead us ? The result would be the same, whether we consider our good deeds as procuring an entire pardon of all our sins, or 'engaging God to be less severe in marking what we have done amiss.' If divine justice can *abate* its claims in consideration of any number of good deeds, then may we assume that they may be increased to an amount sufficient to *cancel* them. But a community of evangelical Christians cannot need to be informed that pardon of sin is a single act of divine mercy ; and that good works, such as we are speaking of, have no part in it. In the spirit of our excellent article, 'they follow after justification, and spring

*Rev. P. M. Wheipley.

out of a true and lively faith, insomuch that by them a lively faith may be as evidently known, as a tree is discerned by its fruit.' We conclude, therefore, that the hiding of a multitude of sins, does not imply the pardon of sin, either in whole or in part. It must, we apprehend, be construed as connected with the doctrine of *rewards*. This doctrine, however, is founded on principles widely different in their nature and application, from those which sustain the great fundamental truths of pardon and justification through faith in Christ; and if the motive held out in the text be explained as connected with the doctrine of rewards, we must be guided in such explanation by the general laws involved in those principles. We will only say here, that these will exclude from the pious acts which shall hide a multitude of sins, all idea of an expiatory equivalent for sins committed.

5. In this view of the subject, the hiding of a multitude of sins is to be understood hypothetically, not of sins actually committed, but sins which as naturally grow out of the backslidings of professors as corrupt waters spring from an evil fountain. This is in accordance with the sense in which the term 'to hide' is sometimes used in the scriptures, which is, to turn away, suppress, or cut off. Hence David, Jeremiah and others, pray that the Lord would not *hide*, or turn away his ear from hearing them. Hence also, Isaiah accuses the Jews of not *hiding* their sins, that is of persevering boldly in their transgressions, and not ceasing to sin. In this sense of the term, whatever suppresses, cuts off, and turns away the incipient streams of corruption, which, if permitted to flow on, would swell to a fountain, is justly said to hide that which it thus prevents. Now when we consider the axioms of our blessed Lord, that 'it must needs be that offences come,' and that 'every corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit,' we see clearly that a vast amount of evil will spring from the backsliding of an individual, as naturally and truly as evil fruit will be produced by a corrupt tree; and that this can be hid, or prevented, only by checking its incipient causes.

6. This interpretation allows to the motive all that force and energy which it seems designed to possess. In rescuing the backslider, we accomplish a work whose tendency is, in the first place, his own individual salvation, and, secondly, a prevention of all the evils which would grow out of his perverseness in a backslidden state. These the apostle sets forth in the terms, 'a multitude of sins.' And who, that has taken the pains to trace the track of the backslider, and to mark the desolations which follow him in all his ways, will say that the language of the apostle is either inappropriate or extravagant? 'One sinner destroyeth much good.' This sentiment, which is true with respect to all sinners, is, in the case of the backslider, peculiarly emphatical. When once given up to the error of his way, to work all manner of wickedness with greediness, how is his heart set in him to do evil? and what advantages does he possess to wound the cause whose peculiarities he so well

understands? He knows better than any one else how to sow the seeds of discord, and to kindle the fires of strife; and with his former love changed into hatred, which is usually of the most malignant kind, what injury may not be expected from him, which it is in his power to inflict? Bring this subject, brethren, within the range of your individual observation. Select us one instance of illustration, any case of backsliding that occurs to mind, and mark its effects. You may see one whom you once knew, perhaps, as a lively and devout christian, having influence in some flourishing society, whose interests he aided to build up. Now he is the most violent and bitter of all the enemies of the cause, in his reproaches against the institutions and the people he once loved. None try more to menace and injure them. Relatives, possibly, and particular friends, are won over to his interests, and roused, by his insidious efforts, to array themselves as his advocates and supporters against the Church. Disaffections, divisions and strife, follow in their train. And whole societies, as we have before said, are hurried into scenes of turmoil, and in many instances their most encouraging prospects are ruined. Nor is this all. Sinners, who, but for these calamities, might have been brought to seek the Lord, are disgusted and turned out of the way. Weak professors are offended. Scoffers are encouraged to mock on. Infidels triumph. And the sacred interests of religion are held up to obloquy and reproach. How many such scenes have been witnessed which may be traced to the backslidings of professors as their legitimate source? Who can reckon the amount of evil which has resulted from them? What blasphemies and profanations, what corruptions, what prostrations of the cause of truth and piety, would have been hid forever, had all the backsliding which have occurred been prevented?

This is the duty strongly urged in the text. Are we, brethren, sufficiently interested in this part of our work? Or do we not too easily give up the backslider? It was a maxim with the Romans, that he who saved a citizen did a more noble act than he who slew an enemy. Let us not forget that he who saves a backsliding brother does an act vastly more important in its connexions and consequences, than he who wins over a soul from the ranks of the enemy. Let me not be misunderstood. I do not mean to say, that we should seek to save an offending brother in the church without repentance and reformation. I have already said, when it becomes evident that one is past recovery, the very duty implied in the text, requires that, for the salvation of the other members of the body, he should be removed. But do we in all cases take that deep interest in this subject which its importance requires? Do we sufficiently endeavor by all possible means, to bring to repentance and reformation those we see going astray? Let us not be unmindful of the duty. The honor of God and the happiness of thousands are concerned in it. MAY GOD HELP US TO BE FAITHFUL IN IT, AND ULTIMATELY BRING US TO HIS EVERLASTING KINGDOM, FOR CHRIST'S SAKE, AMEN!

SERMON II.

THE GOVERNMENT OF GOD VINDICATED.

BY REV. GEORGE PECK.
OF THE ONEIDA CONFERENCE.

O my people what have I done unto thee? And wherein have I wearied thee? testify against me. MICAH, vi. 3.

THE perverseness of man's nature, is exhibited in nothing so strikingly, as in the disposition which he manifests, to call in question the rectitude of the Divine administration.

This propensity prevails in the human heart, in proportion as its depravity remains unsubdued, and shows itself in every variety, from open and avowed rebellion and infidelity to the secret motions of discontent and the occasional murmur.—The principle enters into the composition of every evil temper, thought word, and action; and stamps them with all their deformity.

That the evil is extensive cannot be doubted, and how abhorrent it is to Jehovah, is apparent not only from the stern rebukes which many marked instances of it in the Jews called forth from the holy prophets, but from the tender expostulation in our text. "O my people what have I done unto thee? and wherein have I wearied thee?. testify against me." How touching the appeal.—And mark here: the accusers themselves are challenged to testify in the case! However partial they may be to their own side, it is presumed that conscience will speak out "on God's behalf," and the offenders must take shame and confusion to themselves.—

In this discourse I shall attempt to meet some of the principal objections which are urged against the divine administration. And may the spirit of light and truth be imparted:

"That to the height of this great argument
I may assert eternal Providence,
And justify the ways of God with man."

I. It is alleged, that the introduction of moral evil, and its consequent miseries, into the system, cannot be reconciled with the government of an infinitely perfect Being.—

Ingenious and profound men, have instituted various theories on the origin of evil, and made many bold attempts to rid the subject of its difficulties, and to untie this gorgon knot by dint of metaphysical speculation, but how many of them have "darkened council by words without knowledge!"—

Some have ventured to assert that *God* is the author of *sin*—that he brings it to pass by his own agency.—This we conceive is to destroy all human responsibility, to undeify Jehovah, and to open the flood-gates of infidelity, in all its forms.—Others assert that though God does not bring moral evil to pass by his own direct agency, yet it constitutes a part of his great *plan*.—A link in the chain of his decrees,—and that it is brought about by his providential arrangements *for the greatest good of the whole*. This theory is liable to the same objections as the foregoing, and involves precisely the same consequences, though they are a little more remote from the premises.—And others still, deny the existence of moral evil altogether; and affirm that there is no essential difference between what is denominated good, and what is denominated evil. This theory has been advanced by some who are called philosophers, of both ancient and modern times. But besides that it is disorganizing and demoralizing in the extreme, it is contradicted by the conscience and common sense of every rational man. The truth of this matter unquestionably is, that moral evil came into existence, by the abuse of moral liberty and power, and that in a way not to implicate the Governor of the world in any respect whatever. This it is believed will appear by a careful consideration of the following particulars.

1. Man was constituted a free moral agent, had a law given him every way adapted to his moral power and was placed in a state of trial. Hence he was "free to fall," and the introduction of moral evil was possible. Now will it be pretended, that there was any thing inconsistent with the Divine perfections in creating such a being, and placing him in such circumstances? Especially as he was made "sufficient to have stood," there being no defect in his moral nature, through which his defection was made a necessary consequence. If indeed on any principle, either that of the decrees and agency of God, the weakness of his own nature, or the power of the motives presented to his mind, it was rendered impossible for him to avoid transgression, this would alter the case. Had man been constrained by force of unavoidable circumstances, or invincible power: Had he been placed under any physical or moral necessity to depart from his allegiance, his Maker alone must have been chargeable with the consequences, and of course

the objection would stand.—But should it be plead that the goodness and justice of God would require that man's agency should have been overruled, or destroyed, if his fall could not have been otherwise prevented: this we contend would have been to undo or subvert the work which God had himself pronounced "very good," and to exhibit weakness inconsistent with the character of the Supreme Ruler of the Universe.

2. The will of God was clearly and explicitly revealed to man. The simple and plain prohibition of Heaven, "thou shalt not eat of it" could not well have been misunderstood. Had no clear intimation of the Divine pleasure been made, had the nature of the law or its requirements, not been sufficiently developed to the understanding of man, he could not have been responsible for his act, or justly chargeable with its consequences. This however was not the case.

3. The deleterious consequences were fully set before him. It was fully in the face of this tremendous declaration, "in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die," that our guilty mother "took of the fruit of the tree of knowledge and did eat, and gave also to her husband and he did eat!"—They did not do it in ignorance of the certain ruin they would thereby bring upon themselves: They were not left blind-folded to stumble and fall into the ditch. No room was left even for a rational doubt with regard to the sad result. And it was under this full blaze of light, that they made the fatal experiment which "brought death into the world and all our woes." Then,

> "Blame not the bowels of the Deity,
> Man shall be blessed as far as man permits,—
> Heaven wills our happiness, allows our doom,
> Invites us ardently but not compels.
> Heaven but persuades, almighty man decrees
> Man is the maker of immortal fates
> Man falls by man, if finally he falls."

What more the Creator could have done, to prevent the introduction of moral evil, consistently with the principles of his government, and the moral responsibility of man, we are unable to see. And of course we see no just ground on which the objection can be sustained. Indeed we have never seen a conclusive argument to prove, that God could not, consistently with the perfections of his nature, constitute a free moral agent;—give him a law, —set rational motives before him to induce him to keep it,—and then leave him to the exercise of his own free choice with regard to it.

We never could see how God must be obliged to reduce his creatures to a mere irresponsible machine, in order to save himself from the imputation of being the cause of his fault. All this is a species of metaphysics too refined for us.

II. The unequal distribution of the blessings of Providence, and the means of grace, is made a matter of objection to the Divine administration.—Some are elevated to the highest pitch of honor, influence, wealth and power; while others are depressed to the lowest point of poverty, infamy, and wretchedness some are endowed with the most penetrating and comprehensive intellect,—are able to penetrate and unravel many of the sublime mysteries of nature,—as it were to soar to the heavens and walk among the stars; while others in point of intelligence, are but a trifle removed from the brute creation. Some are so circumstanced, as to have ready access to all the treasures of science and literature, while others are altogether without the means of mental culture, with their intellectual faculties locked up in the grossest ignorance. And finally while some enjoy the light of the gospel, and the sunshine of divine revelation; very many are shut up in the grossest moral darkness and superstition. These facts, it is alleged, indicate that God is partial in the distribution of his blessings, or that he is, in fact, a "respecter of persons." But let it be observed:

1. That happiness is not necessarily dependent on our external circumstances: that there is much more happiness in the lower walks of life, and much less in the higher, than we are apt to imagine that there is; very often, more contentment and real comfort in the cottage than in the palace:—that there are a thousand drawbacks upon the enjoyments of those who indulge in ease, and riot in luxury and affluence; and that there are as many alleviations, which attend the humblest and most wretched condition in human life, and it will clearly appear, that much of the disparity which appears among men, as to the things of this world, exists more in appearance than in reality.

2. That final happiness is not necessarily connected with the most elevated christian privileges; nor is final misery necessarily connected with the want of them.—Many of "the children of the kingdom" after being "exalted to heaven" in point of privilege, will be "cast out into outer darkness," for misimproving the day of visitation; while many who have never been favored with the external means of grace, improving their "one talent, showing the work of the law written in their hearts, shall sit down with Abram, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of God." And consider,

3. That a man's responsibility is in exact proportion to his privileges, "where much is given, much is required, and where little is given little is required."—Men will be finally rewarded, or punished, according to their improvement or misimprovement of the blessings and privileges which they will have received: the man who has but "one talent," if he misimprove it, will not be condemned, because he did not improve "five," but because he did not improve "the one:"—and the man who has "five talents,"

if he improve them, will not be rewarded, because he *had* "five talents," but because he will "have gained other five talents beside them." Thus, equal justice will be administered, in the day of judgement; and the groundless plea of the "slothful servant," that his "Lord was an hard man, reaping where he had not sown, and gathering where he had not strewed," will be forever cut off.

These facts then taken into the account, the diversity, which appears in the circumstances of nations and individuals, furnishes no evidence that "God's ways are" not "equal"—or that "the Judge of all the earth will" not "do right."

III. The unequal distribution of rewards and punishments in the present life. Virtue is often oppressed and afflicted, while vice is exalted. Hence it is urged that men are not rewarded according to their works:—that there is no such distinction made, between the circumstances of the righteous and the wicked, as is necessary to afford evidence of God's love of holiness, and his hatred of sin.

The simple fact, (a fact so clear that I need not here attempt to prove it) that the present, is a state of probation, and discipline, and not a state af retribution, relieves this subject of its difficulties and fully meets the objection. It is our final and eternal state which gives character to our existence, as happy or miserable,—the present, only having any degree of importance, as it stands related to, and exerts an influence upon, that state which is interminable and unchangeable. Hence it is altogether futile, to attempt to judge of the character of the Divine administration, from the present aspect of things. The gospel, by "bringing life and immortality to light," has furnished us with ample means for the understanding of this subject. Guided by its divine light, we are enabled to see a day of retribution, when "the ungodly who prosper in the world—shall be cast down as in a moment," and God's afflicted people, shall "lift up their heads, knowing that their redemption is come." Then will the eternal Judge fully visit the wickedness of the wicked upon him, roll away the reproach from his servants, and vindicate his own honor. "Clouds and darkness are round about him" now, but then, it will fully appear, to an assembled universe, that "justice and judgement are the habitation of his throne." It will then clearly appear, how "foolish are we and ignorant" in arraigning the Sovereign of the universe, before the bar of unenlightened reason, and in judgeing from present appearances of the character of that grand scheme, which as yet, is but in part carried into effect.

IV. The ground upon which the salvation of the sinner is predicated,—that of *mere grace*, is objected to as too humiliating, and even as degrading to our nature.

But, we ask, is the salvation of a sinner feasible upon any other ground? Is original inherent righteousness required, as the

ground of acceptance with God?—this the sinner has lost, and cannot, by his own native energies, recover. Is an adequate satisfaction to Divine justice, for past offences, required? this, he can never render. The pretence sometimes made, that repentance renders such satisfaction being altogether idle and absurd. Is he put upon the terms of perfectly keeping the law? even if this would make amends for past offences, (which by the by it would not) in his lapsed state, the thing is impossible. What then can be done! Where is the guilty sinner's remedy?—Ah! it is grace. Boundless grace, through the grand atonement! All other remedies which have been proposed by men, but aggravate his disease.

But point the trembling penitent, to "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world:" Show him how the justice and goodness of God harmonize in the work of human redemption: how "God may be just and yet the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus:"—that it is to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, that his faith is counted for righteousness:" that it is by grace, without the works of the law; that a man is justified." And with what eagerness does he grasp the precious truth, and how soon does he receive "beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness." This system does indeed humble human pride, and bring the sinner into the dust, and this is the very thing called for by the emergencies of the case. There is in this gracious economy, a perfect adaptation to the condition and wants of the sinner, which shows it to be founded in moral fitness, and to have been devised by eternal wisdom.

V. Those terms and requirements of the gospel, which make it necessary for the sinner to pass through the sorrows of repentance, and a course of mortification, are objected to as unsuitable, unnecessary and severe; as, by these means, no atonement is made for past sin, nor the Divine Being made more placable.

All our repentance and humiliation, can indeed make no change in the disposition of the Deity, or make an adequate satisfaction for sin: but they fix in the mind of the sinner a just sense of the turpitude of sin. The sinner's reformation is one grand end of the gospel scheme. And can the human mind conceive of a more rational method of effecting this, than by giving him, in some measure a taste of the bitterness of sin? Indeed, it is most clear, that until a sense of his moral deformity is impressed upon his heart,—until he sees "the exceeding sinfulness of sin," until "the fears of death encompass him and the pains of Hell get hold of him," and he feels in truth, "that it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God," he will most certainly continue to "roll sin as a sweet morsel under his tongue," and to foster the evils of his heart. The feelings of remorse, will indeed disturb the sinners worldly

tranquility, and powerfully excite his fears, but this fact instead of being in any wise against the principle contended for, is much in its favor, for any process, through which he might be carried, without these results, though it would better accord with the inclinations of the depraved heart, would come infinitely short of the grand object in view, his *salvation from sin.*

Add to these considerations, that we are supplied with every necessary help in this work. We are not chained down by an invincible moral inability, which never can give way, but at the instance of "distinguishing grace and electing love," so that it is impossible for the sinner to comply with these terms, until he is "effectually called," and *none will be so called "but the elect only."* No: did we suppose this to be the fact, we should give up the contest, and yield the grounds to the objector without delay: but, though we find this in *creeds* and *confessions* we do not find it in "the law and the testimony."

VI. The holiness of the Divine law, is objected to by the sinner. In the holiness of the law, lies its great excellency. This quality furnishes evidence that it is the proper standard of moral rectitude. It cuts off the sinner from all hope of salvation *in his sin*, this itself proves it "just and good." Suppose for instance the law were such as the sinner would choose to have it, destitute of moral purity. Would it not be a mere shadow without substance? May I not indeed go farther and say, that it would be a mere system of license, and would consequently be an instrument of extending, instead of checking, licentiousness, and every species of moral disorder.

God is unchangeably holy:—and as man was made for the enjoyment of union with him, the Divine law requires, universal holiness, as the necessary qualification for happiness in that state.—For, rational natures cannot be happy in union with each other, without an assimilation of moral principles, feelings, and tendencies. How then is the sinner to be happy, altogether unlike God, having no sense of the beauties of his character, no relish for the enjoyments of his kingdom,—and being utterly opposed to him,—in intimate union with him,—in his immediate presence surrounded by his glory? Is not the supposition the height of absurdity? Would not the sinner rather wish to flee from God, and hide himself from the splendor of his throne, and seek his place among kindred spirits in Hell, than take up his abode in Heaven? And if so, is it not one of the greatest excellencies of the christian scheme, that it requires and makes provision for the attainment of holiness? Certainly it is—were it not for this, it would effect absolutely nothing for poor man. Leave him unholy, and there is no remedy for him. There is for him, nothing, but "a certain fearful looking for of judgement, and of fiery indignation, which shall

devour the adversary." This is indeed a fearful truth to the man who is in love with his sins, and determined not to give them up. His prospects are dark and gloomy. "If he turn not," he will find to his sorrow, the door of Heaven forever barred against him, and his soul fitted for the "undying worm and the fire that never shall be quenched."

VII. The discipline of the gospel is objected to as too strict. The gospel requires that we should abstain from all evil of every kind, however agreeable to our inclinations; and that we "take up the cross and deny ourselves,"—that we "forsake the vain pomp and glory of the world, and all covetous desirer, so as not to be lead by them, and that we lead a godly righteous and holy life."—That we be prompt, ardent, persevering, and uniform in attendance upon the ordinances of God's house. That we conquer ourselves, "bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ," and we set our face against the whole world!—And these requirements are universal in their application, and imperious in their demands.

They are not a mere form which will yield to circumstances, and bend to the corrupt inclinations of man: but they are altogether inflexible and hold upon us with an unyielding grasp.

And what is there in all this that is really objectionable? Is there any thing hard to a well conditioned mind? No: to such this "yoke is easy and this burden light." The way is none too *narrow*, the gate is none too *straight*, the standard of christian excellence none too elevated. He acknowledges that "the commandment is just and good," and he considers it, his meat and drink, his happiness, his honor, and his "crown of rejoicing" to be found therein. He sees that this holy discipline is calculated to conquer the waywardness of his nature, and restore him to his original dignity. To superinduce habits, such as are essential to the great ends of his being, the glory of the creator and his own highest happiness. He sees in it embodied, "whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report," in fact every thing to admire and esteem. "Wherein then has the Lord wearied us?"

VIII. Lastly: It is objected, that the administration which consigns the sinner to eternal punishment, is equally opposed to justice and goodness. *To justice*, as there is no proper proportion between the punishment and the offence. And to *goodness*, as the punishment does not contemplate the reformation and happiness of the subject.

To this we answer.

FIRST. In relation to the alleged disproportion between the punishment and the crimes, of the finally impenitent, we are

entitled to demand of the objector that he makes such disproportion appear.

And is he prepared for the herculean task? Has he fully comprehended the malignity of sin, and all its tremendous bearings? Is he qualified to determine its magnitude and measure? Has he penetrated all its mysteries and fathomed all its depths? If he is not prepared to answer these interrogations in the affirmative, we wish to understand how he has arrived at the knowledge of the fact, that there is no proper proportion between the sins of the finally impenitent and eternal misery? But does he derive his evidence from Divine revelation? We ask where it is to be found. We have never seen it, but as *we* read the scriptures, every thing *there* is against him. Let the candid enquirer duly consider the following particulars upon this momentous subject, and then see what conclusions he will arrive at.

1. Consider, as far as possible, guided by the light of Divine revelation, the turpitude of sin. How malignant: how abhorrent to the Divine nature; how black with native baseness; how deeply criminal!—

2. That it outrages all the Divine attributes: it impugns the holiness, justice, goodness, wisdom, and truth of God. It is a blow levelled at Jehovah himself, and all it wants is omnipotence to bring him down from the throne of his holiness!

3. It is subversive of the great ends of the Divine government,—the glory of the Creator and the happiness of his intelligent creatures. Unrestrained sin would break down the government of God, and lay waste moral order and happiness throughout the whole universe! The Divine glory would be defiled in the dust, and the true dignity and happiness of all the intelligent creation completely shipwrecked!!

4. Contemplate the extent of the obligations which sin violates. Obligations which arise out of our relation to God as his creatures and the subjects of his government, out of the care he exercises over us, and the provision he makes for us,—and especially the grace he has bestowed upon us, in and through Christ Jesus. And consider that sin is a violation of these *infinite* obligations!

5. Contemplate the amount of good that sin contemns. Consider the treasures of the kingdom of God's grace, and the kingdom of his glory. How vast, how profound, how overwhelming the thought!

"Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered the heart of man to conceive, what God hath prepared for those who wait for him." In this state of ignorance the human mind cannot apprehend, the "depths of the riches" of the future inheritance of God's redeemed. And sin is contempt of these *infinite* and inestimable blessings!!!

Now, after this brief and imperfect survey of the grounds from which we are to derive our conclusions upon this subject, we would ask the serious enquirer, whether he is prepared to regard sin as a *trifle?* Can you certainly determine, that it deserves nothing more than the slight chastisement which it receives in the present life? Or can you confidently conclude that it merits any thing short of eternal punishment; that this would be disproportionate to the offence, and consequently unjust? Are you under no apprehension, that by such a conclusion, you would "err from the truth," and would indeed sin against God and your own soul? Or are you not rather prepared to follow us to the conclusion: that the objection takes for granted what never can be proved, is against all probability, opposed to the most mighty moral considerations, and does deserve to be rejected as altogether unsound and without force.

I now proceed to the consideration of the

Second part of the objection: viz. As eternal punishment does not contemplate the good of the individual sufferer, it would argue a want of goodness in the Divine administration.

It is admitted that eternal punishment does not contemplate the *good* of the subject, but it is denied that it would on that account be a violation of goodness. We reject the principle, that all punishment which does not contemplate the *good* of the subject is a violation of goodness," for the following reasons:

1. The wisdom of all nations, has in certain cases, sanctioned the practice of administering capital punishments. Now it certainly cannot be pretended that this species of punishment is administered with reference to the good of the subjects of it: nor, so long as it appears to human legislators, that the public safety requires it, ought it to be pretended that it argues a want of goodness in them. We are aware that it is honestly questioned, by some, whether the public safety does, in any case, require this species of punishment: but this does in no wise effect the argument; so long as it must be conceded, that provided the public safety did require such punishment, it would be entirely consistent with goodness to inflict it.—

2. Sacred history has left upon record a variety of instances, in which, prominent offenders were visited with signal vengeance, and cut down with a stroke, in the midst of a career of rebellion. And will it be plead, that this punishment was for their good? or if not, will it be asserted, that these instances stand upon record, as so many monuments of the cruelty of our Heavenly Father? One of these conclusions our objector must espouse, if he remain true to his principles.—

3. We are informed in the scriptures that some sinners, for their infidelity and disobedience, were left to a "reprobate mind,"

—that "God sent them strong delusions that they might believe a lie and be damned,"—that "he closed their eyes stopped their ears and hardened their hearts, lest they should see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts, and be converted and be healed." It cannot be supposed, that all this judicial punishment, was designed for the good of the subjects of it:—nor will it be presumed, by any who believe the scriptures, a divine revelation, that it was a violation of goodness.

4. For aught that appears, *the good of the whole*, may require that eternal punishment should be inflicted on the finally impenitent: in such a case, we maintain, that the *goodness* of the *universal sovereign*, would absolutely *require*, that such punishment should be inflicted. And should He, through regard to individual happiness, suffer the good of the universe to be contravened, and the purposes of his government to be thwarted, it would certainly argue a want of such regard to the perfection and happiness of the whole system, as is essential to that "God who is *over all*, and forever blessed."

Many more considerations of equal weight might be brought forward in answer to the objection, but let these suffice. I trust they are quite sufficient to convince the impartial searcher after truth, that the foundation upon which the objection rests, is utterly insufficient, and of course, that the objection is untenable. As for those of a different temper of mind, argument is lost upon them, and were reasons multiplied *ad-infinitum* they would not reclaim them from error.

Having now surveyed the Divine economy in several of its most important parts and bearings, and tested the character of those difficulties in which it is supposed, sometimes, to be involved, we find no cause for just complaint against our Father in Heaven: but are certain, that we have the most substantial reasons for believing that his ways, in whole and in part, will stand approved, before the universe of intelligent creatures forever.

What remains is to *improve* the subject by a few *inferences and reflections.*

1. We infer the sin and folly of attempting to arraign the sovereign of the world. "God's ways are perfect." And of course, in every instance, in which we are opposed to his plans of operation, we are wrong. And when we consider, the world of evidence we have of the wisdom, justice, and goodness of God:—and that every appearance to the contrary, originates in our own ignorance, and is easily explained by a little attention to the subject; how deep appears the guilt of those who "reprove God,"—and how fearful will the issue be when they shall be called upon to "answer it." And what a wonder of mercies, does it

appear, that the wretch who thus recklessly rushes upon the bosses of Jehovah's buckler, is not pierced to the soul, by the sword of justice, in the very act !—But mercy spares the sinner, to afford him further space for repentance, still perhaps, he repeats the deed, and as often as he is called upon to discharge some duty which offends the flesh, or is disappointed in some favorite project, his petulent and unholy nature rises and breaks out in open rebellion !

> " Oh cursed cursed sin, traitor to God,
> And ruiner of man! mother of woe,
> And death and hell! wretched, yet seeking worse,
> Most mad, yet drinking frenzy's giddy cup
> Depth ever deepening, darkness darkening still,
> Thing most unsightly, most forlorn, most sad."

But mark the folly of all this. Is there the least possibility of success in this contest. And dost thou hope, O vain man, to overcome Him, " who weigheth the mountains in scales and the hills in a balance,—who sitteth in the circle of the heavens, and before whom all the inhabitants of the earth are as grasshoppers ?"—And canst thou exalt thyself above the king of kings, and brave the thunder of his throne ?—Ah ! couldst thou collect the hosts of his enemies, human and infernal, and bring them all upon the arena of contest at once,—but the breath of his mouth would scatter them in a moment to the four winds !—And if he " rebuke *thee* in his anger, and vex thee in his sore displeasure," what canst *thou* do ? If he touch thee, thou wilt " perish as the moth," and all thy boasted strength will be paralised under his mighty hand. " Let the potsherds strive with the potsherds of the earth, but woe unto him that striveth with his maker." If a man would contend, let him choose an equal. It is temerity to engage an unequal force,—but it is downright madness for a mortal man to enter the list against Jehovah. Every effort will recoil upon his own head, and the struggle will be consummated in his eternal disgrace and ruin.—O what folly, what dread folly it is for the sinner to harden himself against God. Wrath will soon break out upon him to the uttermost. Jehovah " hath bent his bow and made it ready. He hath ordained his arrows against the persecutors. He hath also prepared for him the instruments of death." I would that he might " foresee the evil and hide himself;" fly to the cross where alone there is sanctuary, and " rest in Jesus wounds secure."

2. The wisdom of suspending our judgement, in relation to such dispensations as are beyond our comprehension. The plans of Providence are " high as heaven, what can we know ? deep as hell, what can we do ! As the heavens are high above the earth, so high are God's ways above our ways, and his thoughts above

our thoughts." Why then should we attempt to measure the infinite height, or to fathom the immeasurable depth? Why "judge before the time," while we can have but a partial and imperfect view of the Divine plan?—

> "Abundant sin! because a mortal man,
> A worm, at best, of small capacity,
> With scarce an atom of Jehovah's works
> Before him, and with scarce an hour to look
> Upon them, should presume to censure God,
> The infinite and uncreated God!
> To sit, in judgement, on himself, his works,
> His providence! and try, accuse, condemn!
> If there is aught, thought or to think, absurd,
> Irrational and wicked, this is more,
> This most; the sin of devils, or of those
> To devil's growing fast. Wise men and good
> Accuse themselves, not God; and put their hands
> Upon their mouths and in the dust adore."

The time will arrive, when the mysteries of God's providence shall be explained, and the light of eternity will disclose to the universe of intelligences, the perfect rectitude of the whole scheme. Then as,

> "His purposes will ripen fast
> Unfolding every hour."

let us wait his good time, to unfold and illustrate his more dubious dispensations,—being assured that "what we know not now, we shall know hereafter," and that we shall ultimately see, abundant cause, to laud and glorify the name of the most High, for all those dispensations, which now appear the most dark and doubtful.

3. How utterly wretched, must be the man, who is ever inclined to "fret against the Lord." His mind is "like the troubled sea that cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt." Like the raging billows, which spend their force against the immovable rocks, and howl back again to the angry deep:—he vents his spleen, and foams out his opposition to God, and recoils back upon his own wretched self, without the least relief, or the smallest mitigation of his misery. Turbulence, anxiety, and rage create a turmoil in his soul, which effervesces, as it were, the fury of demons and the flames of hell! Poor man! how awfully bewildered! how sadly lost! O merciful Heaven, if he is not too far gone, send some celestial messenger, upon the gracious errand, to recover such an one, from the snare of the Devil, and pluck him from the verge of Hell.

4. How necessary and excellent is true *faith*, Faith subjects our rebellious hearts, to the Divine will and pleasure,—enables us fully to renounce our own wisdom and righteousness, and to be in

the hands of God, "as clay in the hands of the potter." However dark the events of Providence, in the light of mere human reason, *faith* gives assurance that they are all ordered in infinite goodness.

"Faith lends its realizing light,
The clouds disperse, the shadows fly,
The invisible appear in sight,
And God is seen by mortal eye."

We have an illustrious instance of this in the Father of the faithful—the "friend of God." Under the most mysterious and trying dispensation which ever visited a mortal man, he "against hope believed in hope, and was strong in faith giving glory to God." When darkness was upon the face of the Divine proceedings, faith penetrated the gloom. When his reason was confounded, his faith triumphed. When the laws of nature, the common feelings of humanity, with all the sympathies of his paternal heart, combined in opposition to the Divine mandate,—his faith said to the troubled elements, "peace be still—and there was a great calm." Deliverance came—God was glorified, and Abram experienced renewed instances of the Divine regards. O the power of faith! how prevailing its influence! how mighty its energy! Who would not "be the children of faithful Abram, by faith," and share his honors? They who would, must like him,

"Leave to his sovereign sway
To choose and to command
So shall they wondering own his way
How wise how strong his hand."

5. And lastly; Let us admire the goodness and condescension of God. When he might come out against us in the fierceness of his wrath, and "consume us in a moment." He addresses us in the language of paternal tenderness. "O my people, what have I done unto thee? and wherein have I wearied thee?"

This touching appeal should break down our obstinacy, subdue our hearts, into "that speechless awe that dares not move,"—hush our complainings, and bring us to "testify against *ourselves*, and make our submission, while it is possible for us to "be reconciled to God," and secure his favor.—O may it be the happiness of the readers, and the writer of this imperfect discourse, to "be subject to the Father of spirits and live,"—that through the influence of Almighty grace, it may be our's at last to unite our humble notes, with those who "sing the song of Moses and the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying great and marvellous are thy works Lord God Almighty just and true are thy ways thou King of saints. HALLELUJAH FOR THE LORD GOD OMNIPOTENT REIGNETH." AMEN.

SERMON III.

ON THE WITNESS OF THE SPIRIT.

BY REV. MATTHEW RICHEY.
WESLEYAN MISSIONARY.

Preached at Halifax N. S. Before the Wesleyan Ministers of the Nova Scotia District, and published by their request

"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." ROMANS viii, 16.

CHRISTIANITY presents to our regard, in perfect unison with the eminency of its claims, the brightest characters of the wisdom, benignity, and holiness of God. As a system of doctrines, it discloses truths profoundly interesting to every human being, which reason, under the highest cultivation and the most inspiring auspices, was never able to discover. Its moral code, prevaded with the lustre of unsullied purity, whilst it throws its salutary laws and awful sanctions over the whole mass of this world's inhabitants, is yet sufficiently minute in its specification of particular duties, to afford appropriate directions in every circumstance and relation in life.—Nor are its provisions for the consolation of the penitent, and the happiness of the genuine believer, less strikingly characterised by fulness and perfection. Justly does an inspired apostle represent the evangelical promises, by virtue of which we are made partakers of the divine nature, as "exceeding great and precious." Distributed through the pages of divine inspiration, like so many radient luminaries adorning the firmament of the church, they effuse a pure and vital effulgence over the path of immortality. Yet these promises, so multiplied and invaluable, may all be comprised in one—that of the gift of the Holy Spirit; a gift which we are taught by the evangelist Luke, to regard as inclusive of all *good things*, chap. xi. 13. compared with Matt.

vii. 11. The Holy Spirit is emphatically denominated "*the promise of the Father.*" Acts i, 4. It is indeed the grand promise of the New Testament, as the Messiah was of the old; and hence it gives to the evangelic dispensation its high and appropriate character of THE MINISTRATION OF THE SPIRIT. From the quickening influences of this Spirit, it is that the gospel derives all its vitality, along with that wonder-working energy, in virtue of which it is "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." To expatiate over the range of the hallowing and beneficent operations of this divine agent, is an exercise alike adapted to promote the instruction of the mind and the melioration of the heart. Among these operations, that to which your earnest attention is now invited, is the benign act, by which he conveys to the believer's mind, a persuasion of his interest in the paternal love of God. This equally momentous and consolatory truth, is clearly exhibited in the words selected as the basis of the present discourse, not in the form of a mere doctrinal statement, but in the more animated and spirit-stirring language of actual and blessed experience:—"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God."

It is of great importance that our views of the Internal Witness of the Spirit, as the common privilege of christian believers, should be scripturally correct, and that in regard to a doctrine, so intimately associated with all that is consoling in the gospel scheme, we should "*be ready always to give an answer to any man that asketh us a reason of the hope that is in us, with meekness and fear.*" Let your attention then be given,

1. To the nature of the witness of the spirit.

The proposed elucidation of the interior testimony of the Spirit, cannot reasonably be expected to embrace the *mode* in which it is communicated to the believers heart, accompanied with the most satisfying convictions of its heavenly origin. Such knowledge lies without the sphere of reason, and it is a point upon which revelation is silent. Amidst abundance of disclosure, the revealing Spirit has maintained on the subject of his own influences, as on all others connected with our salvation, the most dignified reserve. But to tolerate a doubt in our minds as to the *reality* of this operation, merely because we are incapable of comprehending its *manner*, were as unreasonable, as the attempt to pry into so elevated a mystery would be vain and unhallowed. "The wind bloweth," says our blessed Lord, "where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, or whither it goeth: So is every one that is born of the Spirit."

Till the curtains of futurity are uplifted, we must be satisfied to know in part, and to prophecy in part. Instead, therefore, of

exclaiming in a tone of sceptical astonishment—"*How can these things be?*" Instead of wasting our intellectual strength in strenuous idleness, by endeavoring to develope what is shaded in impenetrable obscurity, let the full vigor of our minds be directed, under the guidance of the word and spirit of God, to attain accurate conceptions of the *nature* of that *witness*, which "*he that believeth on the Son of God, hath in himself.*" The subject, my brethren, is of paramount importance; It is the basis on which the living temple of experimental religion is founded, and the glory by which it is pervaded and animated.

In what then, "are you not ready, with some degree of impatient solicitude to put the question," in what consists the internal witness of the Spirit? Sensible of our inadequacy to speak in explanation of the things of God, with that accuracy and precision which their peculiarly sacred and momentous character requires, we could wish it were in our power to reply to this interrogation in words which the Holy Spirit teacheth. But though the sacred volume no where furnishes a definition of the witness of the Spirit, it does what nearly amounts to the same, in a manner more accordant with the dignity of a divine revelation, by supplying materials in abundance, out of which such a definition may be educed, with appropriate illustrations.

In exact consonance, we conceive, with those passages that refer to the subject under consideration, the witness of the Spirit may be defined—*A vivid and joyous impression, wrought in the believer's heart, by the immediate energy of the Holy Ghost, whereby he is satisfactorily assured, that his sins are pardoned, and that he is adopted into the spiritual family of God.*

It is thus that, when God justifies the sinner through faith in the propitiation of his dear Son, he gives him at the same time, "the *knowledge* of salvation by the remission of sins." Till this divine attestation of our pardon is communicated, it is impossible for us, while the salvation of our souls is the supreme object of our solicitude, to experience true peace of mind. Concious guilt forbids it—the awful dread of dying unforgiven forbids it—the heart appaling anticipations of the coming judgement forbid it—the Spirit of bondage, speaking to our hearts in a voice which we can neither silence nor mistake, forbids it. Despondence and gloom oppress our minds: our downcast eyes and hands indicate the deep and agonizing emotions of our souls; the delusion of worldly vanity is at an end; and we refuse to be comforted by such shadowy and evanescent pleasures as earth presents. Prostrate at the throne of heavenly grace, we implore mercy with the earnestness of a dying man. In full view of the high alter of Calvery, and in an undivided dependence upon the merits of the divine piacular victim, with

whose blood it is imbued, we sue for redeeming grace. Our prayer is heard; our plea is accepted; and he with whom there is plenteous redemption, blotted out our sins as with a cloud, and our transgressions as with a thick cloud. It is now that the Holy Spirit resigns his office as reprover, and assumes the more attractive and endearing character of the comforter; "For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry Abba, Father." Rom. viii. 15.

In order more luminously to unfold the nature of the interior testimony which this great agent bears to the believing mind, I specify *some of its distinguishing characteristics.*

Let it be observed and remembered then, that *it is purely of a spiritual character.* In expatiating on spiritual subjects, the most remote from any strict analogy to objects of vision or of sensation, the imperfection of our knowledge renders it compulsory to convey our ideas of the former, in language and illusions borrowed from the latter. Hence the tropical style pervades the sacred volume. Now, this manner of exhibiting the things of God, though of absolute necessity, and combining, when rightly apprehended, many valuable advantages, is, nevertheless, susceptible, of misapprehension and abuse from those who have not "their senses exercised to discern spiritual things." Such persons, associating gross material conceptions, with the imagery imployed by the Spirit of inspirations to give us clear and vivid perceptions of spiritual subjects, comprehend not the light that encircles them, but remain veiled in ignorance and unbelief. An impressive and memorable example of this we have in the case of Nicodemus. Had he known that the words with which the Redeemer accosted him were *spirit* and *life*, he would not have instituted in reply the impertinent enquiry "*How can a man be born when he is old?*" nor, rapt in unbelieving surprise, have cryed out "*How can these things be?*" The language employed concerning the internal witness of the Spirit has not escaped similar perversion. It has been thought by some, that the advocates of the doctrine in question believe that this divine attestation is conveyed to the recipient by means of an audible voice from heaven, or through the medium of a visionary representation. Nothing can be more erroneous and unfounded than such an idea. That the Spirit's testimony is *ever* invested with such circumstances we contend not; and were it *always* conveyed with some such solemn and significant accompaniment, still this would no more form any constituent or essential part of the witness itself than did the live-coal with which one of the Seraphim touched the lips of the awe-struck prophet, of that divine and hallowing influence, by which his iniquity was taken away, and his sin purged. It is a testimony borne not to the eye—to the ear—nor

even to any of the inferior faculties of the soul, but immediately to the *mind*—the *understanding*, by a preternatural, and interiorly sensible operation of the Spirit of the living God.

This witness is immediate and direct.

It is not a result arrived at, by a process of rational inference or deduction, from principles however luminous and divine, but a persuasion instantaneously produced, by a direct manifestation of the Holy Ghost, shedding abroad the love of God in the heart. This is its most prominent and identifying feature. With deep regret, we add, however, it is that feature which a large and respectable class of theologians regard, if not with positive dislike, yet with the most sensitive jealousy and suspicion. They too, indeed, admit, that there is a witness of the Spirit, which it is the the privilege of christians to enjoy. But what, according to their views, is this witness? The Spirit, they say, has laid down in the New Testament, the discriminating marks of a genuine believer in Christ, and, if on comparing our character and experience with those marks, we trace a coincidence between them, we are authorised in deducing the conclusion that "we are the children of God." Some advance a step further, and recognising the indispensible necessity of divine guidance to conduct us in so solemn an investigation, to a conclusion in which we may repose with unsuspicious confidence, tell us that "whilst believers are examining themselves as to the reality of their conversion, and find scriptural evidence of it, the Holy spirit, from time to time shines upon his work, excites their holy affections into lively exercise, renders them very efficacious upon their conduct, and thus puts the matter beyond doubt; for while they feel the spirit of dutiful children towards God they become satisfied concerning his paternal love to them."*

It is readily granted, that frequent and scrutinizing examination of our spiritual state, by the word of God, is at once an imperative duty, and a valuable means by which christians attain confirmatory evidence of their interest in the Divine Redeemer. But it is perfectly gratuitous and absurd, to call the evidence derived from this source *the witness of the Spirit of God*. For, it is obviously the witness of *our own spirit*, or in the words of St. Paul, the testimony of our conscience, a testimony altogether distinct from, though harmonizing with, the attestation borne by the Spirit of God. Have the persons who thus commingle and confound the Spirit's testimony with the operations of our own minds, ever duly weighed the explicit and emphatic phraseology which the Apostle employs, as if with a design to preclude the possibility of his being misunderstood? "The Spirit ITSELF beareth witness." Could worlds be more precisely indicative of a *personal* and *direct* operation?

* Scott's Commentary.

By what principle of interpretation, is any one authorised in affirming, contrary to the plain and unsophisticated import of the passage, that the meaning is not that the Spirit *itself* attests the paternal love of God to our minds, but that it enables *us*, by shining upon our hearts, and exciting in us holy affections to draw the conclusion for ourselves? It is an objection fatal to this sentiment, that it strips the Holy Spirit of his character of witness, and thus recognises only *one* attestation to the believer's adoption, that deposed by his own spirit or conscience; whereas there are *two* witnesses indisputably mentioned in the text. Consistency requires that we either expunge the witness of the Spirit from our creed entirely, or admit in accordance with the obvious and genuine meaning of the word of God, that it is immediate and direct.

The Spirit's witness is productive of peace and joy in believing.

As nothing short of the manifestation of the paternal love of God to the heart, has power to tranquillize the agitations of the awakened conscience, and inspire filial confidence in Him, so this inestimable blessing is fully adequate to these desirable effects. Animated by this assurance, the believer's bosom thrills with sensations of conscious and ineffable pleasure, "and a stranger doth not intermeddle with his joy." Amid all the worlds tribulation, his is the peace of God that passeth all understanding, and the inspiration of that joy which is unspeakable and full of glory. Does he survey the enchanted brink that overhangs the gulph of irremediable woe, on which he once stood unconscious of his awful danger, adoring gratitude for so great a deliverance prompts the jubilant lay:—

Where shall my wond'ring soul begin?
How shall I all to heaven aspire?
A slave redeem'd from death and sin!
A brand pluck'd from eternal fire!
How shall I equal triumphs raise,
Or sing my great Deliv'rer's praise?

Now contemplating his present privileges, and *then* surrendering his delighted mind to the bliss-inspiring anticipations of a coming immortality, he summoneth angels and men to admire with him, the unsearchable riches of redeeming grace. "Behold!" he exclaims with the beloved disciple, "Behold! what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God. Now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." Such is the tranquillizing and joyous influence of the witness of the Spirit. "He who," before his enjoyment of this great blessing, "had found no resting place in this world, and who had wandered through it in quest of

some object, however insignificant, that might interest him, and for a moment at least remove the sense of hopeless languor which lay dead upon his heart, finds now an object which his widest desires cannot grasp, even filial communion with God here, and the full enjoyment of Him, through a magnificent eternity, on the very threshold of which he already stands. He whose conscience of sin has made life a burden to him, and at the same time has taught him to look with a vague horror to futurity, applies to that fountain which was opened in the house of David for sin and for uncleanness, and he has peace with God through faith in Christ Jesus."

The Spirit's witness is abiding.

By which I mean, that, as it is coeval with justification, so while the recipient of this invaluable blessing retains the faith through which he was at first justified, and constituted a child of God, the Holy Spirit continues to attest his divine filiation. With the father of lights, (now become his father) from whom, among ten thousand other displays of munificence, *this* good and perfect gift cometh down, there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. "The gifts and calling of God are without repentance," Rom. xi. 29—Never will he revoke in displeasure, what in mercy he communicates, unless it is forfeited by unfaithfulness and sin. If he hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts crying *Abba, Father*, it is because we are sons, and therefore, while we stand by faith in this filial relation, he will not, he cannot, by suspending our knowledge of his pardoning and paternal love, destroy the very foundation of our filial privileges. We are aware that far different views of christian experience are entertained by many, who whilst they regard the enjoyments of the believer as fluctuating and intermittent, resolve his privations of comfort, for the most part, into pure acts of the divine Sovereignty. In their opinion, God may, and often does, for inscrutable reasons, withhold or withdraw from his children the light of his countenance, and permit them to walk in darkness. But whence have they learned this? From the Bible? surely not. It is not under this repellant aspect that the Scriptures present the sovereignty of God. Two or three passages have indeed been pressed into the service of this gloomy and chilling opinion; but they have been so often rescued from perversion, and placed in their proper light, that I deem it scarcely necessary to occupy your time in examining them. On the words of the evangelic prophet (1. 10.) the greatest stress seems to be laid: "Who is among you that feareth the Lord, and obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness and hath no light? let him trust in the Lord, and stay himself upon his God." Were it as clearly evinced as it has been gratuitously assumed, that the darkness here mentioned is of a spiritual nature, still the

wide difference between the Mosaic and the Christian dispensations would neutralize the force of the inference deduced from it, in support of the doctrine we are now opposing. The elevated privileges of christians walking amid the splendors of the sun of righteousness, are not to be measured by the attainments of Jews, whose knowledge of divine things resembled, in comparison, the faint and feeble gleaming of the orb of night. But that the prophet, in the words cited, speaks of spiritual darkness, is assumed not only without the slightest proof, but contrary to internal evidence of the passage itself, is apparent from the injunctions it contains. The individual whose melancholy case is described, is directed to trust in the Lord, and stay himself upon *his* God—precepts which can never be obeyed by those who are under a complete eclipse of spiritual light. It follows then irresistibly, that the darkness mentioned by the prophet, is the gloom of severe and accumulated outward trial, unmitigated by the hope of deliverance in time, but which while the believer, in the exercise of a meek and acquiescent spirit, *trusts in the Lord and stays himself upon his God*, can never extinguish the spiritual glory kindled and enshrined in his consecrated breast. Be it then deeply and indelibly impressed upon our minds, as a most salutary and important truth, that if we are destitute of the tranquil and holy comfort of the Spirit's interior testimony, *the cause is wholly in ourselves.* It is not God that withdraws from us; but we that withdraw from God. God does not, purely to display his sovereignty, hide from us the light of his countenance, but we, by our unfaithfulness to Him, intercept the heavenly effulgence. Let us yield ourselves unto him, to be governed by his word, and led by his Spirit; then shall our path be as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." Prov. iv. 18.

Having thus attempted to show wherein the interior testimony of the Holy Spirit consists, and to delineate its most prominent attributes favor me with your continued attention, while I endeavor,

II. To evince that this witness is the common privilege of true believers in Christ.

Entering now on the argumentative part of this discourse, we cannot forbear expressing our astonishment and regret, that evidence of this position should be demanded by persons professing to have derived their religious sentiments from the oracles of God. Deeply indeed is it to be lamented, that from the views of experimental godliness entertained by not a few christians and christian teachers, there should be systematically excluded, a doctrine inwoven with the very texture of the gospel, as from the following considerations, it is hoped, the doctrine in question will satisfactorily appear to be.

Previously, however, to the exhibition of these evidences, it is deemed proper here to introduce a cautionary suggestion, that the mind of the least established believer may not be unnecessarily perturbed.

This divine testimony, though it be the privilege of all real christians, is not equally clear and efficacious in all; nor do the same persons enjoy it with equal vividness at all times. It is susceptible of material variations in its degrees of strength. Hence, an eminent divine, who has handled this subject with his accustomed perspicuity and force of reasoning, recommends the sparing and cautious use of the term *assurance* to designate this testimony, not indeed as objectionable in itself, but, as he justly remarks, "because it seems to imply, though not necessarily, the absence of all doubt, and shuts out all those lower degrees of persuasion which may exist in the experience of christians."* Like the light of day, which, regulated by the aspects of the heavens, is sometimes bedimmed with vapors and storms, and at others shines with unclouded splendor, the believer's consciousness of the divine favor may vary in strength, from just such a degree as is essential to the exercise of the christian graces, through all the intermediate stages of experience, to that "full assurance of faith," irradiated by which—

> "The christian dwells, like Uriel, in the sun:
> Meridian evidence puts doubt to flight;
> And ardent hope anticipates the skies."

But it must not be forgotten, that as the solar beam, however shaded, is distinguishable from the gloom of night, as also from fictitious splendor; so there are not wanting criteria, by which the genuine witness of the spirit in its very lowest degree may be discriminated, on the one hand from a total obscuration of the light of God's countenance, and on the other, from the illusions of fancy.

These observations being premised, the evidences of the doctrine stated above, may now be adduced.

That the Spirit of God is *capable* of conveying to the believer's mind such an attestation of his pardon and adoption, as has been exhibited in the course of the preceding observations, may be assumed without fear of contradiction. At least, no objection to this position can be anticipated from any who believe the word of God. In the light of that word, the Spirit appears before us, arrayed in the glory of the distinctive and unalienable attributes of Supreme Divinity. He pervades immensity with his presence, and, omniscient in wisdom, "searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God." Whilst yet the earth on which we dwell was without form,

* Watson's Theological Institutes. Part IV. page 480.

and void and darkness was upon the face of the deep, the Eternal Spirit

> "Was present, and with mighty wings outspread
> Dove-like sat brooding on the vast abyss."

To him are attributed operations which none but the Omnipotent could achieve: he adorned the heavens with their splendid garniture, and "formed the crooked serpent." *He* is the source of inspiration. By *Him* was futurity unveiled to the admiring gaze of the prophets, and from *Him* emanated all the sublime and interesting discoveries contained in the sacred volume. "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." *His* too is the work of transforming the soul into the image of God. The whole hallowing process by which the believer is made meet for the celestial inheritance, from the earliest dawn of incipient conviction, till he perfects holiness in the fear of the Lord, forms a part of the appropriate and peculiar work of the Holy Spirit. But why this profusion of argument to prove, what it would be blasphemy to deny:—That He who constructed the mental constitution of man, and whose inspiration giveth him understanding, can with equal facility interiorly "speak peace unto his people and his saints."

Since, then, to question the *power* of the Holy Spirit to operate an impression on the believer's mind of his acceptance with God, united with a luminous assurance of its celestial inspiration, precluding at once doubt and delusion, would involve the denial of his claims to Divinity; it is submitted, whether, even anterior to direct evidence of the *fact*, that there be any *improbability* in the supposition, that the benignant and condescending Deity should thus manifest his favor to those whom he justifies. True it is indeed, that the least blessing from the High and Lofty One who inhabiteth eternity, should fill us with grateful astonishment, and call forth our animated thanks. When we contemplate his peerless majesty, as displayed in the magnificence of his works, well doth it become us, with thrilling awe and adoring wonder, to exclaim—"What is man that thou art mindful of him! and the Son of man that thou visitest him!" But assuredly, it is not the will of God that our astonishment at his condescension and grace, should degenerate into unbelief—the tomb of devotion. That the sense of his approbation, which we regard as the common privilege of his people, affords a very striking proof of his limitless mercy, is readily allowed. But does it, we would ask, transcend? does it equal? falls it not infinitely below *the unspeakable gift* by which he has already commended his love towards us? Amid the splendid manifestations of his mercy with which the gospel surrounds us, were it not ungrateful, were it not guilty, to tolerate a single misgiving, as to his

willingness to bless with every requisite of holiness and happiness, those upon whom he looks with paternal complacency? What! did he so "love the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him might not perish, but have everlasting life?" To achieve our redemption did he ordain, that the exalted personage who is the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, should assume our degraded nature?—When Gethsemane exhibited a spectacle to make angels weep—when the agony of the divine, the prostrate sufferer, was such as to cause the blood to ooze from every pore of his body, and to extort the plaintive petition "O my Father, if it be possible let this cup pass from me," would the Father not permit it to pass from him until he drank it? And did he give him to the odium and the tortures of the cross, that we might triumph in immortal life, and be crowned with unfading honor? Why then should it be thought a thing incredible, that He who is thus rich in mercy, should bless his people with the cloud dispelling light of his countenance? Must not the opponents of the doctrine of the immediate attestation of the Spirit acknowledge, that, admitting its truth, it must of all blessings be the most eminently adapted to promote our sanctification, by invigorating our faith, our hope, and love, and to augment our happiness, by expanding and elevating the mind with filial confidence and joy in God our Saviour. Now, this its obvious and undeniable tendency, furnishes strong presumptive evidence of its truth. For, he that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely confer upon us a blessing so peculiarly calculated to assimilate us to Himself, in holiness and felicity? But the doctrine rests not upon mere probability, however strong. It is susceptible of more satisfactory demonstration. We evince its truth by fair deduction from those precepts in the New Testament, which obviously imply that the persons to whom they were addressed, were not only participants of grace, but that they were conscious of the divine change that had taken place in their character. Of this kind is the injunction—"*Grow in Grace.*" How can any individual appreciate—how can he possibly recognize his obligations to obey this command, unless he is previously assured that he is the subject of grace? The advances of a plant towards maturity are not looked for till it have taken root. Before a man *grow* in grace, he must be grafted into Christ the living vine; and while he remains destitute of a consciousness that he is in a state of grace, in vain is the exhorted to grow therein. The same reasoning is strictly applicable to the Apostolic injunction—"*Rejoice evermore.*" Impossible must it be for him, who has been awakened to a vivid perception of the value of his soul, and the necessity of a preparation for eternity, to

cherish exultant emotions of mind, if the Lord the Spirit have not revealed Christ in his heart.

Then, only then, we feel
Our interest in his blood,
And cry, with joy unspeakable,
Thou art MY Lord, MY God.

Of the christian's hallowed and triumphant joy, this divine evidence of his acceptance with God is the animating soul. Destitute of it, just in proportion to the depth and solemnity of his views of eternal things, would be the agitation and gloom of his mind.

But I need not specify additional precepts in illustration of a matter so plain. How sincerely soever any man may be devoted to God, yet if abandoned to perplexing uncertainty regarding his interest in the divine favor, it is apparent that this must give a character of correspondent servility and incertitude to the spirit and course of his obedience: his service will be that of a *slave*, not of a *son*—the trembling subjection of *fear*, not the willing and joyous devotedness of *love*. "If," as a recent learned Commentator very forcibly reasons, "to any man his acceptance with God be hypothetical, then his confidence must be so too. His love to God must be hypothetical, his gratitude hypothetical, his obedience hypothetical. 'If God have forgiven my sins, then I should love him, and I should be grateful, and I should testify my gratitude by my obedience.' But who does not see that this must necessarily depend upon the 'IF' in the first case. All this uncertainty, and the perplexities resulting from it, God has precluded by sending forth the *Spirit* of his *Son* into our hearts, by which we cry, *Abba, Father.*" *

Of this cheering truth the Sacred Volume affords evidence more lucid and decisive than has hitherto been adduced. "We have received," says St. Paul, "not the Spirit of the World, but the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God." 1 Cor. ii. 12. That he here alludes, not to the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit peculiar to the Apostles, but to those influences without which the natural man cannot receive or know the things of the Spirit of God, whoever attentively peruses the subsequent part of the chapter, will, it is apprehended, be fully satisfied. Admitting then the applicability of the passage to all who are *spiritual*, does it not plainly and irrefragably evince, that one part of the Holy Spirit's office, is to give to believers a distinct perception of the blessings which God of his unmerited mercy confers upon them? Among these, their adoption into the spiritual family of God, is, unquestionably, entitled to an eminent rank. One distinguished end of the Spirit's Mission from on high

* D. A. Clark's Note on Rom. viii. 15.

would therefore be unaccomplished, in case he did not impart to the children of God the knowledge of their salvation.

Should it be objected to the preceding arguments, that though they may be admitted to be evincive of the doctrine of the conscious influences of divine grace, yet they are not available to establish that speciality of character attributed to the Spirit's witness, as being *immediate* and *direct:*" We reply—It is demonstrable, that independently of *such* a testimony, no man can either know that his sins are pardoned, or that he is the subject of regenerating grace. Let not our meaning be misconceived. It has already been observed, that *two* witnesses are distinctly recognized by the apostle in the text—the witness of our spirit, as well as that of the Spirit of God. But that the deposition of our own spirit, to our adoption, cannot subsist independently of the direct attestation of the Spirit of God, is, we think, clearly evincible from the admissions of our opponents themselves.

It is a mutually accorded sentiment, between those who advocate and those who oppugn the direct witness, that the inferential evidence of salvation is founded upon a perceived agreement of our spiritual state with the biblical characteristics of a child of God. These characteristics are what the Apostle denominates—'*the fruit of the Spirit*,' which, he says is, "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." Gal. v. 22. Now, nothing surely can be plainer, than that these associate graces of the Spirit, which are the discriminating signs of real discipleship, must be infused into our hearts, before we can be conscious of possessing them. They must exist before we can have any perception of their existence. On this ground, therefore, no legitimate persuasion of acceptance with God can be generated in our hearts, until, born from above, we actually exhibit these adornings of the Spirit. Take the first in St. Paul's enumeration as an elucidative example. Love to God is the vital flame of religion. The man whose heart is not *consciously* animate with this celestial affection, is not authorised in concluding that he is regenerated. But so long as enmity against God is his dominant propensity, he cannot be conscious that he loves God. How then, it is inquired, is this natural enmity subdued, and the opposite grace diffused abroad in his heart? "We love him because he first loved us" is the appropriate and scriptural answer. Our love to God must spring from a sense of His love to us. It is filial affection that he requires of us: but a conviction of his *paternal* love to us can alone enable us to love Him as *children* in return. Who or what can give birth to this conviction within us? Who has power to dispel our anxious doubts, with reference to our saving interest in the mercy of God? He alone, whose prerogative it is to forgive the repentant sinner, through faith in his Son. As pardon and adoption

are purely acts of the Omnipotent, the knowledge of these acts can be received by the sinner in whose behalf they take place, only by immediate communication from the Spirit of God. "What man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of a man which is in him? even so, the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God." 1 Cor. ii. 11. By the same Spirit, therefore, and by his operation alone, can they be made known to our minds. If, then, justification and adoption be acts suspended entirely upon the will of the Deity, and can be transacted only by Himself; if a persuasion that we are the privileged objects of these redeeming acts be essential to the creation of filial love to God in our hearts; if the all-searching Spirit who alone knows what passes in the divine mind touching our salvation, and only He, can impart to us the knowledge of our pardon;—and to these statements, we are sure, none can reasonably demur;—we are fully warranted in concluding, that the immediate attestation of the Holy Spirit must, in the nature of things, precede not only every other authorised persuasion of the favor of God, but the foundation also upon which such a persuasion can be superinduced; because it must precede that LOVE, which is the fulfilling of the law, and dissociated from which, all other attainments will profit us nothing.

From these considerations, we conceive, it cannot but be apparent to every one who brings to the examination of this momentous doctrine a mind unsophisticated by prejudice, that to contend for any scripture evidence of our adoption into the family of God, independent of the internal and immediate witness of His own Spirit, is to affirm what is absurd in theory, and can never exist in experience: it is, in short, to assert, that an effect may be produced without a cause.

In perfect accordance with the result to which we have been conducted by a fair investigation of this subject, is the running language of the Spirit of inspiration, in describing the inestimable priveleges by which Christians are distinguished in the present life. "At that day," our Lord assured his desponding disciples, "ye shall know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you." "He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself unto him." John iv. 20, 21. "But we all with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." 2 Cor. iii. 18. "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." Rom. v. 5. "It pleased God," says Paul, "who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me." Gal. i. 15, 16. And, so far was he from regarding his exalted privilege in this instance as

peculiar to himself, that he explicitly represents Christ in believers (and how could He be in them but by a similar revelation?) the hope of glory, as the elevated and inspiring theme of his ministry. Col. i. 27, 28. "And grieve not the Holy spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." Eph. iv. 30. To these citations it may be sufficient to add the text, in connection with the preceding verse, and the parallel passage in the Epistle to the Galatians ch. iv. v. 6. Amid the pleasing and instructive variety of phrase and of allusion exhibited in these declarations, there is an observable harmony of import pervading them all. He who, on the face of such inspired announcement, does not recognize the doctrine which it has been our endeavor to explain and establish, must have prejudged the case, and be determined to adhere to his opinion; and any further attempt to dissipate his doubts, or to assist his mental vision, would be vain and inefficient.

Others, however, there may be, whose greatest preventative against the admission of the doctrine, is an impression that it is novel and unsanctioned. They have been taught to regard it as one of those innovations of modern theology, which, as it cannot plead the authority of prescription, should be condemned as imaginative and misleading.

The charge of novelty, in the present case, may very easily be repelled. "Luther," we are informed by his biographer, "received much comfort from God in his temptations, by that saying of St. Bernard, 'It is necessary to believe, first of all, that you cannot have forgiveness but by the mercy of God; and next, that through his mercy *thy* sins *are* forgiven *thee*. This is the witness which the Holy spirit bears in thy heart, *Thy* sins *are* forgiven *thee*.' And thus it is, that according to the apostle, a man is justified freely through faith." On this point, the famous Genevan reformer has delivered his sentiments, in a tone of uncompromising fidelity. Speaking of the *earnest* of the Spirit, he remarks:—"As this simile is frequently used by the apostle, so it is a very apposite one. For as the Spirit, in attesting our adoption is the pledge, and by confirming our faith in the promises is the seal; so, with equal propriety, he is called the earnest, because he ratifies the covenant between God and us, which would otherwise remain, in a manner, unsettled. Hence, it is worthy of remark, that, since this certainty transcends all human understanding, it is the office of the Holy Spirit to seal in our hearts, what God has promised in his word, and therefore is he denominated, the anointing, the earnest, the Comforter, the seal. It must also be observed, that, all who have not the Holy Spirit's witness, enabling them fully to confide in God, who has called them to the certain hope of salvation, have no just claim to the appellation of Christians." *

* Calvin's Commentator 2. Cor. 1—21, 22.

"It is the office of the Holy Ghost to assure us of the adoption of sons, to create in us a sense of the paternal love of God towards us, to give us an earnest of our everlasting inheritance. *The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God are the Sons of God. And because we are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying Abba, Father. For we have not received the Spirit of bondage again to fear: but we have received the Spirit of adoption whereby we cry Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.* As, therefore, we are born again by the Spirit, and receive from him our regeneration, so we are also *assured by the same Spirit of our adoption;* and because being sons, we are also *heirs, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ*, by the same Spirit we have the pledge, or rather the earnest of our inheritance. *For he which established us in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; who hath also sealed us, and hath given us the earnest of his Spirit in our hearts; so that we are sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession.*" †

III. From the view which has been taken of this subject, it now remains, to derive some lessons of practical utility.

The vital importance of the Spirits internal witness, and its pre-eminent adaptation to promote the comfort and holiness of believers, *entitle it to a distinguished place in the ministration of the word of God.*

To the scheme of salvation, as unfolded in all its completeness in the gospel, this doctrine bears a relation, not less intimate and important, than the key-stone does to the arch that it holds together. It is the golden link that binds it to the throne of God. Unlike one of those less considerable appendages of the system, which may be thrown into the shade without materially affecting the whole, if it be not made to stand forth with due prominence, there cannot be exhibited a consistent and adequate view of the truth as it is in Jesus. Take this solitary doctrine away from the gospel, and all the stupendous discoveries that remain lose their mighty and saving energy, and become as void of coherency and meaning as the leaves which the Sybil strewed to the wind. Peculiarly potent too is the moral influence which when rightly apprehended, it is fitted to exert. From the general diffusion of accurate conceptions concerning it, the most valuable results could not fail to emanate. The subsidence of that prejudice with which it has at present to contend, would be among the humblest triumphs of such increase of knowledge: Christians would then take a brighter, and more

† Bishop Pearson's Exposition of the Creed.

expansive view of the hope of their high calling, and, yielding their hearts to hallowed and earnest aspirings after intimacy of communion with God before unfelt, they would approximate much nearer in the elevation of their enjoyments, and in the purity and simplicity of their lives, to the character of the primitive followers of our Lord. How incumbent then upon every christian teacher, who would be able with propriety to adopt the apostolic avowal—*I have not shunned to declare all the counsel of God*—is the duty, of assigning to the witness of the Spirit, a conspicuous place in his ministrations. Were it neccessary, my respected and beloved Fathers and Brethren in the Ministry, that in reference to a duty so imperative, your pure minds should be stirred up by way of remembrance, it would be repulsively indecorous in *me* to press such obligations. But the memento is uncalled for. You have not forgotten the monitory words of the venerated Wesley—"It more nearly concerns the Methodists, so called, clearly to understand, explain, and defend this doctrine, because it is one grand part of the Testimony which God has given them to bear to all mankind. It is by his peculiar blessing upon them in searching the Scriptures, confirmed by the experience of his children, that this great evangelical truth has been recovered, which had been for many years well nigh lost and forgotten."

Under these vivid perceptions of the deep and awful responsibilities attached to the ministerial office. I would turn to all in this assembly, who are the professed disciples of Christ, and say—*Let none rest without the enjoyment of the Holy Spirit's testimony.* Remember, *if any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his.* Have *you* come, let me then enquire, have *you* come, self-condemned penitent, believing applicants to the throne of heavenly grace, and implored mercy, and obtained this Spirit? Has there descended upon *your* minds that rich and renewing unction from above, without which you cannot be Christians indeed? Do you wear enshrined in your breasts the living pledge of your Redeemer's love? Have you the earnest of the Spirit, which can alone constitute you authorised expectants of the inheritance of the saints in light? Beware of a delusive peace. Let nothing satisfy you short of what the Bible teaches you to seek and expect, as absolutely indispensible to your salvation—*the Spirit of adoption.* But I address some I trust many, who walk not only in the fear of the Lord, but also in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, With you, brethren, is the secret of the Lord; the sense and evidence of his covenanted favor. Estimable treasure! It is better than rubies; and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared unto it. Oh! my brethren, guard, by unremitting attention to every means, by a prompt compliance with every dictate of the Spirit, by an obedient subjec-

tion to the will of God, and by vigilant circumspection in the whole of your deportment; thus guard, and keep unto the end, the heavenly treasure. Never obliterate by unfaithfulness, the hallowed impress which your hearts have received. *Grieve not the Holy Spirit, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.*

FINALLY, *Let those who have hitherto lived without hope, and without God in the world, yield to a conviction of their wretchedness and danger,* and *seek the Lord while He may be found.* Sinners! you have violated the law of God; and against you it speaks out its thunders. You have resisted the Holy Spirit: you have despised the the riches of redeeming love. And still, God is waiting to be gracious unto you. He has created, He hath redeemed you; and he willeth not your death. His long-suffering has been protracted to the present moment, that you might have space to seek him, and that his goodness might impel you to repentance. In language which strongly contrasts your moral turpitude with his unexhausted compassion, he continues to address you—*Ye will not come unto me, that ye might have life.* Oh! what will ye do when earth's shadowy scenes are receding away from your view, and eternity—an awful eternity—is just about to disclose and throw around you its immeasurable scenes and unchanging realities, if unsupported then by the consolations of the Holy Spirit? Let the dread anticipation wake your dormant consciences, and excite you to flee from the coming wrath. Why these desires to linger in the devoted plains? Why these pleas for procrastination —*Go thy way for this time: when I have a convenient season I will call for thee?*—Why these seductive pleas, that disarm the power of our ministry, and cause its impressions to be so evanescent? Is not present happiness the object of your desires and pursuits? Oh! when will ye believe, that the celestial plant blooms only under the genial light and influence of the favor of God? If you would find rest to your weary spirits come to Christ who alone can give it. In vain do you seek it elsewhere. Here, and here alone are there, to be found the requisites of true and ever-during bliss. Here are the merciful announcements of pardon, to dispel the overwhelmings of conscious guilt; here is the blood of sprinkling; here are the consolations of the peace of God that passeth all understanding; here are the rapture-breathing promises of redeeming grace; here are the sublime enjoyments of communion with God; and here too, to crown the whole, are the expanding prospects of ineffable and unending glory!

> ——"And shall the victor now
> Boast the proud laurels on his painted brow?
> Religion! O thou Cherub! heavenly bright!
> O joys unmix'd and fathomless delight!
> Thou, thou art all!"

SERMON IV

THE CONVERSION OF SAUL OF TARSUS.

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OF THE NEW YORK CONFERENCE.

And when Saul was come to Jerusalem, he assayed to join himself to the disciples: but they were all afraid of him, and believed not that he was a disciple. Acts ix. 26.

The Conversion of a soul from sin to righteousness, from the service of Satan to the service of God, from being the enemy of God and man, to his becoming the friend of both; is a work so evidently above all human power, that none but confirmed infidels, or mere heathens, have ever supposed that anything less than the agency of God could effect it.

When therefore we see a man so transformed in his nature; so changed in his views, his passions and his habits; from being the persecutor and the murderer of an unoffending class of his fellow-men, as to become their admirer, their associate, their apologist, and their fellow-sufferer, it argues, allowing the man be one of ordinary wisdom and prudence, that the cause which he has espoused, has more than ordinary claims to the attention of every sober and reflecting mind; and that some powerful agency must have been employed in the disposing of his mind to such a change.

When, again it is considered, that, in submitting to such a change of views, he renounces all pre-conceived opinions; all former prejudices; and forsakes the associates of his youth, and of his former choice; gives up all hope of preferment, ease, wealth, and honor; and encounters shame, poverty, reproach, and the loss of all things, which men have been known to esteem in every age; for the sake of establishing a system, and of forming a sect, which shall not even have the honor of his name to perpetuate it; is it not a proof, either that the man is mad, or that the new cause which he has espoused is divine?

The conversion of Saul of Tarsus from Judaism to Christianity, and his labors and sufferings as an apostle of Christ—; including

also his conversion from sin to holiness, and an entire renovation of character, from that of a furious persecutor, to that of a most illustrious philanthropist and patient sufferer, are in themselves no inconsiderable proofs of the truth of the Christian religion. In discoursing on the text we have chosen, let us notice

I. The history of this extraordinary man.

The illustrious person whose conversion we are about to relate, was a Jew, of the tribe of Benjamin, and his parents were Hebrews. He was born at Tarsus in Cilicia, and hence, was by birth a free citizen of Rome. His parents sent him in early life to Jerusalem, to study the Jewish law, under the direction of Gamaliel, the most famous doctor of that age. He made great progress in his studies, and as a Jew, lived a very blameless life. He was of the sect of the Pharisees, and was beyond many, a strict observer of the law of Moses. In those days a new sect arose, at first called Nazarenes, afterwards Christians, whom he thought it his duty, by every way he could devise to affront, and to oppose, to persecute, and to destroy; and thinking that his conduct herein was pleasing to God he was 'exceedingly mad against them.'

When Stephen the protomartyr was murdered by the mob, Saul, though not a very old sinner at that time, consented unto his death, and probably rejoiced at the deed; for he was very active in the persecution that followed. 'He entered the houses of the Christians, and hauled both men and women to prison.' He entered the synagogues where the Christians assembled themselves at any time, and caused them to be beaten with rods; yea so fiery was his zeal, that he compelled them to blaspheme; and persecuted them even unto strange cities. Not satisfied with what he had already done, but still 'breathing out threatnings and slaughter' against the disciples of the Lord, he went unto the high priest, and desired of him letters to Damascus, that if he found any of the new sect, whether men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem.' Fine work indeed for a man of note, a gentleman and a scholar, to be engaged in; dragging men and women, fathers and mothers, from their families and their honest occupations for no other crime than worshipping the Lord their God! Fine business for a priest of the Most High God, to be making out credentials for such a blood-thirsty monster, authorising him to commit such outrages upon the peace of society—*True priest-craft this!* Admirable zeal for God, indeed!—But mark the wisdom and mercy of God, wherein was fulfilled that ancient promise to his church, 'when the enemy shall come in like a flood, the spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him.' Whilst Saul was upon the road, and drawing near to Damascus, all on a sudden,

about noon, a light from heaven brighter than the sun, threw its dazzling beams around the persecutor and his associates. The splendor was overpowering, "and when they had all fallen to the earth, one like unto the Son of man," stood in bright array before the eyes of this noted persecutor. His countenance was like the light, and his voice was as the sound of many waters. Saul alone however, heard the voice, which in a most majestic manner said to him, *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?* The culprit knew him not, but tremblingly asked him '*Who art thou Lord?*' The Saviour replied in a manner suited to the dignity of his character. "*I am Jesus whom thou persecutest.*" The persecutor was cut to the heart, and said, "*What wouldst thou have me to do?*' Jesus commanded him to rise, informed him of his purpose concerning him, bade him go to Damascus, where he should be further instructed concerning his immediate duties. Having arrived at Damascus and taken lodgings with one Judas, he continued there three days and three nights fasting and praying, but without sight all that time. At the end of this period Ananias, a Christian Preacher, was divinely directed to go and ask for him, and finding him, laid his hands on him and recovered him of his sight. Saul had no sooner received his sight, than, he made a solemn profession of his faith, was baptized, and afterwards filled with the Holy Ghost. After eating, and recovering his strength, regardless of whatever poverty, reproach, or persecution might await him, he began to preach that same Gospel which he had once labored to destroy, and such was the wisdom with which he spake that many in Damascus were converted to the faith. This is a brief history of the life of this great man, up to the time of his conversion.

II. Let us notice the genuineness of his conversion to christianity.

1. From his own testimony this appears collated with that of the author of the Acts of the Apostles, as to the change which took place in his mind. "Ye have heard (says he to the Galations) of my conversation, in times past, in the Jew's religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the Church of God and wasted it. But it pleased God who called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen." To Timothy he remarks, that in his former life he was 'a blasphemer' and a 'persecutor' and 'injurious;' but that he 'obtained mercy because he did it ignorantly in unbelief.' To the Philippians his words are, 'But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung that I may win Christ.' From these passages we learn by com-

paring them with the narrative given by the author of the Acts of the Apostles, the reality of that change which took place in the history of this great man.

2. The description which he has given us in the 7th Chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, in connexion with the two first verses of the 8th Chapter of that Epistle, of the commencement and progress of a work of grace in the human heart, agrees so well with the facts related by the Evangelist that we cannot but think the Apostle herein had an eye to his own experience; and in this view it furnishes another evidence of the genuineness of his conversion. 'I was alive without the law once; says the Apostle but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died.' How well does this describe the case of a self righteous Pharisee, and the power of the divine word when set home upon the conscience, producing that 'war in the members' so finely described in the subsequent verses. 'O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?' May we not suppose, that Saul of Tarsus, felt all that is expressed, and all that is implied in these words, during his three days of blindness, fasting and prayer, whilst at the house of Judas in Damascus? And that from his inmost soul he began to thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord, the moment he heard the words of Ananias 'Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled wi[illegible] the Holy Ghost.' How sweet must the name of Jesus have so[illegible]ed in the ear of this penitent, accompanied with the restoration [illegible] his bodily sight! It is well described by the poet in the follov[illegible]g inimitable verse.

'His name the sinner hears,
And is from sin set free;
'Tis music in his ears,
'Tis life and victory:
New songs do now his lips employ,
And dances his glad heart for joy.'

One can almost imagine that the following, are the very words used by the new convert as he found himself filled with the Holy Ghost 'bearing witness with his spirit that he was then a child of God. 'There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life, in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death'

3. His *humility* after he became an Apostle, is another evidence of the genuineness of his conversion. As a Pharisee of the strictest sort, which he was before his conversion, there is no doubt but that he was full of *pride*, for that was a very conspicuous trait in the character of a Pharisee, but after conversion his *humility* was

equally conspicuous, 'for (says he to the Corinthians) I am the least of the Apostles, and am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the Church of God.' To the Ephesians he says, 'Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints,' and to Timothy he acknowledges that he had been the 'chief of sinners.' Language more expressive of deep humility and self abasement can scarcely be conceived. To the 'grace of God,' not to any works or merit of his own, does he continually ascribe the change that was wrought in him, ever acknowledging, 'by the grace of God I am what I am.' (see 1 Cor. 15. 9, 10. and Titus 3. 3—7.)

4. His manner of life, after his visit to Damascus evinces the reality of his conversion, and the 'sincerity of his love,' to Christ. His incessant labors—his self-denial—the persecutions he endured—the miracles he wrought—the purity of his doctrines, —his unspotted life, and martyr-like death, all unite to prove, that the religion he espoused was neither an imposture, nor a cunningly devised fable.'

That St. Paul was not an *impostor* appears by this one circumstance, *the utter impossibility of carrying on a piece of fraud*, either in Judea or in the Gentile world at the time that he labored to establish the Christian religion. To say nothing of the jealousy and opposition of the Jews which every one who reads his Bible is perfectly acquainted with; let it be remembered that at 'Rome, Corinth, Athens, Ephesus, and Philippi, in all which places he preached, he had obstacles to remove the most insurmountable by human power: and which without the divine assistance he could no more remove than he could make a world. He had the policy and power of the civil magistrates to combat; for it is well known, that in all Heathen countries the established religion was interwoven with the civil constitution. He had the interest, credit, and craft of the priest, the corruption, the prejudices and passions of the people, and (which perhaps was a greater obstacle than all,) the affected knowledge, the boasted reason, the wisdom, and the pride of the philosophers, to obviate, and subdue; and yet, in spite of all these, he established churches in every place, and in every region through which he travelled. The event therefore sufficiently proves that God was with him, and that his mission was divine.

'All this is allowed' says the objector, 'but after all, was he not an *enthusiast*?' Yes indeed; if, when as he was journeying to Damascus, meditating destruction, and breathing out threatening and slaughter, he had imagined he saw a vision from heaven, denouncing the anger of God *against the Christians*, and commanding him to *persecute them without mercy*, and his after life had been unsuccessfully marked with as much zeal *against* the religion of Christ

as it was in its favor, then indeed; but not as the case now stands, can he be accounted an enthusiast.

III. Let us now notice more minutely, the steps which led to his conversion.

The first cause which led to this event was doubtless the 'grace of God.' So the Apostle himself teaches in many parts of his Epistles. 'By the grace of God I am what I am.' But then grace works by means. We may therefore look upon the following as instrumental causes in this great work.

1. The prayer of the dying martyr Stephen.

If St. Stephen had not prayed (says St. Agustine) the church of Christ could not have numbered among her saints, the Apostle of the Gentiles.' The prayer itself was full of benevolence, for Stephen was full of the Holy Ghost, and in the spirit of his dying master when he prayed. It was this that made the prayer 'effectual' as well as 'fervent.'

2. The light from heaven, which was no ordinary light.

To suppose that it was a Meteor, or an electric flash, is rather a weakening, if not a degrading of the subject—it is allowing the Deists too much, who gravely tell us that 'Saul was on horseback, and that he had an epileptic fit. But this method of interpreting, does in no wise account for what follows: The light, therefore was miraculous, and it is much more likely that it was the *outbeaming splendor* of him 'who is the brightness of his Father's excellency,' and who on this occasion appeared unto Saul.

3. The power, and the voice which accompanied that light.

The power was divine, and struck him and his companions to the earth. The *voice* was the voice of Him who will at the last day, raise the dead from their graves.

Saul not only *felt* the power, and *heard* the voice, but at first *saw* the speaker (ver. 17,) *whose glorious appearance however overpowered his mortal vision* and for three days deprived him of bodily sight.

4. The vision, in which he saw Ananias coming in and putting his hands on him, that he might receive his sight. (ver.12,) and Ananias' coming to him, at the end of three days, as he had seen in the vision.

Now as there was neither *priestcraft* nor *legerdemain* in all this, but a chain of *miracles*, from first to last, the whole was doubtless intended to convert this great sinner from the error of his ways, and the result proves, that the whole was guided by the hand of 'Him who is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working.'

5. Saul fasted and prayed. And this was a means, well calcu-

lated in the order of God, to bring him into the possession of the blessings of the gospel of peace.

Fasting and Prayer were very common exercises among the Jews, when they wished to avert the displeasure of Heaven, or to obtain his special blessing. Saul therefore betook himself to these exercises as the appointed means of grace, and the result was glorious. God was intreated. The prayers of the penitent were answered, and he 'obtained the knowledge of salvation by the remission of sins.' From the history of this man thus far, we may learn the exceeding riches of divine grace. He was *prevented* from imbuing his hands in the blood of the innocent. He was *awakened* to a sense of his sin and danger. And the only way of salvation, was made known to him, through that grace, which as he says (I Tim. 1. 14,) was 'exceeding abundant with faith and love.' We learn also in the case of this man, that 'works meet for repentance' such as 'fasting and prayer' are acceptable in the sight of God. 'Repent ye therefore and be converted that your sins may be blotted out; for 'except ye repent ye shall perish.' *Fast*, ye sons and daughters of luxury, *fast*, and thus humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, and he shall lift you up.' *Pray*, thou poor, broken hearted penitent. Go, and smiting on thy guilty breast say, 'God be merciful to me a sinner,' and He who pardoned the bloody-Monarch of Judah, the penitent Thief—Saul of Tarsus the dying Earl of Rochester and the gallant Colonel Gardiner—will also pardon thee.

IV. His attempt to join the Christian Church.

After Saul was converted to the Christian faith, 'he tarried certain days with the disciples at Damascus, and immediately began to preach Christ in the synagogues of the Jews.' This was no doubt looked upon by many to be a great confirmation of the truth of Christianity; that a person who had been such a noted persecutor of it, should suddenly become such an intelligent and strenuous preacher of it. This miracle upon the mind of such a man, outshone the miracles upon other men's bodies; and *the giving Saul another heart*, was more than giving men to speak with other tongues.' But notwithstanding the wisdom with which he spoke, and the undoubted evidences of his conversion such was the blindness, obstinacy, and deep-rooted malignity of the unconverted Jews, that finding it impossible to answer his arguments, or to damp his zeal, they resolved to silence him by putting an end to his life. It was now that Christ began to show him by experience what probably he had before shown him in vision how great things he must suffer for his name's sake. The Jews having taken counsel to kill him, watched the gates of the city night and day, lest he should make his escape. But their laying in wait was known of

Saul, and the disciples took him by night, and let him down by the wall in a basket, and he escaped out of their hands. *And when he was come to Jerusalem, he essayed to join himself to the disciples.* He was doubtless considered a disciple, whilst at Damascus, but probably there was no regularly organized Church there as yet. Coming therefore to Jerusalem where the Apostles, Peter, and James, presided over the infant Church, he attempted to become a regular member of that body. They were now more dear to him than his persecuting associates had ever been. For persecutors, however closely they be in league with each other when they wish to make common cause against the Lord and against his Christ, know nothing of that delightful, hallowing, soul-cementing influence, which is fragrant as the sacred oil on Aaron's beard, and refreshing as the dew which fell on Hermon's thirsty hill. Their 'friendship,' if friendship it may be called, is the friendship of Pilate and Herod; and their 'concord,' is the 'concord of devils' as Milton saith, 'Devils with devils damn'd, firm concord hold.' Such friendship, and such concord, when it fails of executing the object of its zeal, often recoils upon itself; and as it cannot live but by 'scattering firebrands, arrows, and death;' it often throws these dreadful engines among the ranks of its own party.

Unlike this, in every sense of the word, is the union of those hearts which are renewed, and sanctified by grace. It is a union in which the happy subjects thereof are

> 'Partakers of the Saviour's grace; the same in mind and heart;
> Nor joy, nor grief, nor time, nor place, nor life nor death, can part.

Such was the union of the first followers of the Lamb

> 'They all were of one heart and soul.
> For only love inspir'd the whole.'

Their desires and designs, their hopes and joys, their motives and their conduct, were the same. Purity of intention, singleness of heart, childlike simplicity, and godly sincerity; intense love to God, and fervent love to man, were the ruling principles of their life. The love which actuated them, 'did not behave itself unseemly; it sought not her own, was not easily provoked, thought no evil; it bore all things, believed all things, hoped all things, and endured all things: and the wisdom that guided them, was from above, and it was pure, peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated; full of mercy and good fruits; without partiality and without hypocrisy.' In this golden-age there was neither unrighteousness, nor wickedness, nor covetousness, nor maliciousness, nor envy, nor deceit nor malignity nor murder. No speaking evil

one of another, nor so much as thinking evil, without the most palpable evidence. There was a mutual forbearance of the members of this community towards each other, and each one esteemed another better than himself. In short, it was the most harmless, the most peaceable, the most holy, and the most happy community that has ever been seen upon earth. It was no wonder therefore that Saul, having been renewed in the spirit of his mind, was anxious to join himself to the infant Church. His conduct in this, was worthy the imitation of all those, who through the preaching of the Gospel, have had the eyes of their understanding enlightened, and who have been turned from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, who have tasted that the Lord is gracious, and have obtained the knowledge of Salvation by the remission of sins. Nay, not only of these, but of all those who have 'a desire to flee from the wrath to come, and to be saved from their sins,' provided they believe in the doctrines of the Church to which they wish to be united, and are determined by the grace of God to 'manifest their desire of salvation by doing no harm, by doing all the good in their power, and by using the means of grace, and attending on all the ordinances of God.' A *Solitary* religion is not the religion of the Bible. It is not good, in this sense, 'for man to be alone.' He was formed for society, and is capable of benefitting society as well as of being benefitted by it. Therefore let every one who believes in the Christian religion, and is desirous of obtaining the salvation of his immortal soul, join himself to 'the Church of the living God.'

V. But in the case of the converted Saul, in respect to his joining the church, there was a serious obstacle in the way, namely the fears and the unbelief of the disciples.

'They were all afraid of him, for they did not believe that he was a disciple.' Their conduct in this was very natural, and to a certain extent praiseworthy. They hesitated, as to receiving him into the Church, and well they might. Their hesitancy was dictated by wisdom and prudence. They knew his former manner of life, and as yet, (he having brought no letters of commendation with him, certifying that he was a disciple, and that he had just cause for removing from Damascus) had no certain evidence that he was a true disciple of the crucified Jesus. They were afraid of him, and well they might. They knew that he had been a furious persecutor; and probably some of them bore the marks in their bodies, of that cruelty and rage for which he was so famous in the days of his enmity against Christ. They did not believe that he was truly converted to *that faith* which once he labored to destroy, for such a supposition would be an impeachment of the correctness of his former proceeding. They were therefore willing to allow that he

was an *honest enemy* before, and that his *friendship* now, was but *feigned and hypocritical.* Deliberation in this case was their wisdom. Rashness would have been folly; and their conduct, the circumstances taken into the account, is worthy of imitation, rather than of censure. Professed christians are often too anxious to drag persons into the church; and by every allurement and device that can be sanctioned, and, it is to be feared, by some, that cannot be justified, to induce them to cast in their lot with them, whether they have been converted or not, whether they have a desire of salvation or not, whether they believe the doctrines of the Church or not. The result of such measures proves that their adoption is not the dictate of sound christian policy. Members obtained in haste, are often in haste to depart, or if they tarry are more troublesome than profitable, and in the end, a reproach, rather than an ornament to the Church of Christ.

Having noticed the history of Saul, of his conversion and of the results, we will now address a few words to the *unconverted.*

And 1st. *To the persecutors of God's people.* 'Thus saith the Lord that pleadeth the cause of his people:—I will contend with him that contendeth with thee;—He that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of mine eye—Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense saith the Lord.' Have you ever considered this, you that persecute the children of God, that HE is the avenger of their wrongs. Have you not heard of the fearful judgements that have befallen the oppressors of God's people: of the terrible death of Herod, the murderer of the innocents, who intended to have murdered the 'desire of all nations;' and of Herod Agrippa the murderer of James the Apostle who was 'eaten of worms;'—and of Catullus governor of Lybia the cruel persecutor of the Jews, who 'though he was only turned of his office by the Romans, yet fell into a complicated and incurable disease being sorely tormented both in body and mind. He was so dreadfully terrified, that he continually cried out 'that, he was haunted by the ghost of those whom he had murdered; and not being able to contain himself, leaped out of his bed, as if he were tortured with fire, and put to the rack. His distemper increased until it put an end to his miserable existence, and thus he perished, a most signal instance of the divine displeasure.' Have you not heard of the awful end of Maximinus who put out the eyes of many thousands of Christians. Soon after the commission of these inhuman cruelties, a disease arose among his own people, which greatly affected their eyes and took away their sight. He himself died miserably, and upon the rack; his eyes starting out of his head through the violence of his distemper.' Many other instances might be mentioned.* Persecution, how-

* See Buck's Theological Dict. Art. 'Judgements of God.'

ever in these enlightened days, and in this happy country, does not assume so fearful an aspect, as in those days of ignorance and barbarism; and this is a circumstance which calls loudly for the unfeigned gratitude of the children of God. 'O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, for his wonderful works to the children of men. Let the Redeemed of the Lord say so, whom he hath redeemed fromt he hand of the enemy: and gathered them out of the lands, from the east, and from the west, and from the north and from the south.' But though no cruel Herod reigns, nor blood-thirsty Mary sits upon the throne, nor envious Voltaire cries out 'crush the wretch,' yet possibly there may be those, whose spirits are unreconciled to the reign of Christ, and who in *secret* 'bend their bow, make ready their arrow upon the string, that they may *privily* shoot at the upright in heart;' and to these it may not be amiss to say, 'Be wise now therefore O ye Princes; be instructed, ye judges of the earth:—kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little:—for the Lord shall reign upon the wicked, snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest; this shall be the portion of their cup.' 'Repent ye therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out,' so shall you 'escape the damnation of hell.'

2dly *To every other class of sinners;* to those who despise the gospel, and the riches of God's grace:—to the openly profane:—to pleasure takers:—to the careless;—to procrastinators;—to the self-righteous:—to formalists;—to hypocrites;—to them which cause division:—to the luke-warm:—to backsliders, and to those that are at ease in zion, to all of you, and to every one of you we say this day 'Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.'

3d. *To the youth*, we would also address a word of exhortation. Let not your hearts deceive you! You are not persecutors we grant; you do not despise the gospel, its ministers or its ordinances; you are not openly profane; neither are you hypocrites; nor are you apostates from the way of truth. No, you respect the truth, you revere the ordinances of the gospel, you love the ministers of the sanctuary; you are not haters of God nor his people. If you commit sin, it is not out of *malice* to the fountain of goodness; it is not out of *enmity* to the people of God, but to gratify yourselves, or to please others, or because it is the fashion of the day. But it is *sin* remember after all. Suffer the word of exhortation therefore I pray you and 'take heed lest you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.' You have *strength* so has the 'warlike horse.' You have *beauty*, so has the 'flower of the field.' You are *amiable*, but you are by nature children of wrath even as others.' One hour's disease can deprive you of strength. One month's affliction and your beauty is gone. One fatal accident and your

loveliness is no more. Your strength perhaps is your boast; your beauty is your pride; the accomplishments of your person and the endowments of your mind are your *idols!* And are you idolaters? Is the God of Heaven as much out of your thoughts as he is out of your sight. Do you love and serve the creature more than the Creator? O 'consider this, you that *forget* God, lest he tear you in pieces and there be none to deliver. O make not HIM your enemy, who has hitherto proved himself your best friend; rather 'acquaint now yourselves with him, and be at peace, thereby good shall come unto you. Receive, I pray you, the law from his mouth, and lay up his words in your heart. Then shall you have delight in the Almighty, and shall lift up your face unto God: you shall make your prayer unto him, and he will hear you.' 'Repent ye therefore and be converted! that your sins may be blotted out, and the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.'

4th. *To the aged.* There is but a step between you and death. You are now on the brink of the grave. You must shortly give an account unto Him who is ready to judge the quick and the dead. Look over your lives I pray you. Consider what God has done for you. Look at yonder Sun! How many times has he risen upon your tent? Look at the trees in your garden! how many times have they yielded their fruit to supply your wants! Look at the seas, the skies, the earth! Did they ever refuse to minister to your comfort? Now look at yourselves and see if you have answered the end of your creation and if you find you have not, Repent for death is near. Eternity is at hand! Lastly, *to men of education, talent, and influence.*

You are the men to whom God has given 'five talents.' You are the men to whom the multitude look up. It is you that give tone to public opinion. You are the *Saviours* or the *destroyers* of our race. To you the God of Heaven has intrusted an awful power, and an awful responsibility. Let your talents, and influence be imployed on the side of Christianity, and 'mercy and truth shall meet together; righteousness and peace shall embrace each other; truth shall spring up from the earth, and righteousness shall look down from the skies—God himself shall be our God—and glory shall dwell in our land.'—O ye men of the world! your *education* is of the most finished character; your *talents* of the highest order; your *influence*, like the influence of the sun, fills the circle where you move! Have you *learned* to live for eternity? Are your talents *employed* in promoting the glory of God, and the universal good of mankind? Is your influence *exerted* towards the removal of all possible evil, and the promotion of all possible good? If not, you have hitherto lived in vain; and except you also repent you must perish like the common herd; for, 'there is no respect of persons with God.' May God grant you his grace for Christ's sake—Amen.

SERMON V.

THE EFFICACY OF FAITH AS ILLUSTRATED IN THE CHARACTER AND LIFE OF THE APOSTLE PAUL.

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'I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.' GAL. II. 20.

THE character of Christianity, considered as a system of religious truth, is peculiar to itself. This appears by comparing it with all other systems of religion, of which we have any knowledge. Nor is this surprising, considering that it claims, and by evidence most abundant, demonstrates itself to be of divine origin. Its influence in the formation of character is alike peculiar. It is most admirably adapted to the condition of man, considered as a sinner; it describes his real character, marks his deplorable degradation, and points out his cure. It not only provides and promises, but, when brought to bear on the humble enquirer, effects whatever is desirable. It enlightens the understanding, removes the load of guilt from the conscience, subdues and subjects the unruly spirit to divine control; purifies and spiritualizes the mind, and plants in the bosom a hope blooming with immortal life.

The process by which it effects its objects is peculiar. Unlike every other system of false religion, it begins by laying the whole superstructure of man's own righteousness, and all the hopes founded thereon in ruins. It deprives him of all expectation of obtaining salvation from and by himself, and assures him that if he be saved, it must be by the interposition of another: thus its influence upon the human heart is most humiliating; but though it humbles, it exalts; though it kills, it makes alive.

In the passage before us, the Apostle shows, that by the deeds of the law, whether ceremonial or moral, no flesh can be justified.

But he leaves us not to despair of obtaining salvation by other means, much better adapted to our moral helplessness, and quite as consistent with all the perfections of Jehovah. In pursuing this subject, it is proper first to observe the character of the Christian's life, and secondly, the principles from which it proceeds.

I. We are to observe the character of the Christian's life. However important it is on most occasions, to exhibit the character of our Lord Jesus Christ, as the only proper standard of Christian excellence, yet, as he knew no sin nor imperfection of any kind, as in him were united the divine and human natures, as he was arrayed in all the attributes of Supreme Divinity, it would seem like presumption in us to attempt any comparison between him and any human being, or to hope to make attainments in moral excellence similar to those he manifested.

That the author of our text was eminently a Christian, is obvious to all acquainted with his history. In him were most remarkably exemplified the principles, the spirit, and the practice of his Divine Master. And, although, the circumstances under which he lived, the important work he was called to perform, the wonderful revelations which were made to him, and the fact that he acted under the direct inspiration of the Holy Ghost, may make some difference in his character from that of an ordinary Christian; yet in all its essential traits, they are the same. Perhaps, then, we cannot do better, than to look directly to the life of the Apostle for an exemplification of those excellencies, which should adorn the life of every follower of Jesus.

1. *A view of the Apostles life, contrasted with what it once was, will most strikingly serve our purpose.* 'I was alive once without the law.' As if he had said, I supposed myself alive to God in all that he required of me,—that in my tempers, words, and actions, there was a strict conformity to his holy law. I never once imagined myself to be a sinner, and of course indulged the hope of eternal life, purely on the ground of my own righteousness. The idea that I must be saved as a sinner, who deserved nothing but wrath and banishment from God to an eternal hell, was as revolting to all the feelings of my heart, as it was incompatible with all my fondly cherished views of my own goodness, and the expectations of eternal life I had founded thereon. Thus in his former life are most obviously apparent his spiritual ignorance, self-righteousness, and self-confidence. He was ignorant of the spirituality, purity, and extent of the divine law. He was alike ignorant of his own character, and by consequence, of the very nature of that righteousness which God requires. From this proceeded his self-righteousness. For no cause is more effectual, through grace, to remove this disposition, than a correct knowledge of our own hearts, contrasted

with the purity and extent of the divine requirements. As he was not acquainted with these most essential points, he presumed on his own goodness,—fancied that his own righteousness was allsufficient to give him acceptance with God and admission to glory.

From hence proceeded also, his self-confidence. Observe how he proceeded in his career of persecution. He 'made havoc of the church, entering into every house, and hauling men and women, committed them to prison,' confidently supposing at the same time that he was doing God service. But, contrasted with his life afterwards, how great the dissimilarity! By the influences of grace, he was awakened and made acquainted with himself. This discovery sapped the foundation of the whole superstructure which he had raised on his fancied goodness; and, instead of a proud, self-righteous Pharisee, we now have an humble contrite sinner, laying low in self-despair. Under those rays of divine light which darted into his mind, his ignorance vanished, his self-righteousness was annihilated, his self-confidence was destroyed; and as a condemned criminal, conscious that he had forfeited all right to the divine favor, he was prepared to receive mercy as the free gift of God. Thus the old building was laid in ruins, that a new one composed of more precious materials might be reared to God; and he become an habitation of God through the spirit. In view of that amazing stoop of divine mercy thus manifested: in delivering him from a degradation so low, a sense of guilt so intolerable to be borne, a punishment so dreadful and so justly merited; his exulting soul, under the influence of the emotions of gratitude to God, and benevolence to men, rejoiced to proclaim to others this new and living way of life and salvation. And he was now prepared to enter,

2. *Upon a life of self-denial.* It was not enough, that, at the moment of his conversion, he should make an entire surrender of himself to God, to be henceforth consecrated to his holy service; but he became thoroughly convinced from those views he now entertained of the corruption of his heart, the perversity of his mind, and the temptations and trials to which he must inevitably be exposed during his probation on earth, that he must be a self-denying man to the close of his life. In reference to the same fact, he observes, 'I am crucified with Christ,' 'the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world,' 'I die daily.' It was his constant effort to remain dead unto the world, that he might live unto God. He relinquished the pleasures, the honors, and all the emoluments of the world; nay more, whatever made his brother to offend, though it might be numbered with innocent enjoyments, was cheerfully sacrificed, that the cause, which had become as dear to him as existence, might not be impeded in its prosperity. It was in this spirit of self-renunciation he lived, and not a day passed, without providing an occasion for its exercise.

He had adopted the will of God as the rule of all his inward tempers, and outward actions, and, as the whole current of his natural inclinations set in opposition to this will, it became indispensable that he should deny himself in all things; and, through the aid of divine grace, improved by constant effort, he acquired this gracious habit: he was thus enabled to bring all things into subjection to the mind of Christ. In this he was pre-eminently a follower of his divine Lord, who came not to do his own will, but the will of him that sent him. Having obtained this most valuable trait of character, he was prepared for all the reverses he might be called to experience during his earthly pilgrimage. By this means we can account for the equanimity he ever manifested. He rose superior to the smiles and frowns of an opposing world, the wiles of the devil, and the failures of falsehearted and apostatized brethren. With confidence unshaken in his God, he was enabled 'to stand averse against the world 'singularly good.' The influence, which gave such strength to his character, came from above. But few men ever had more self-command; none were ever more independent of all the outward circumstances of life.

3. *His, was a life of benevolence.* This heaven born principle, was shed abroad in his heart, at the moment when he obtained justifying mercy. It is indeed no more than the out-breathings of a renewed soul:—a soul brought into fellowship with God. It is one of those vital emotions, which is never separated from one truly born of God; and so necessary that no one can be a Christian without it. It was based upon the love of God and the love of man, which always exist in union in the believing soul. This benevolence was *ardent and sincere.* It was very unlike that which proceeds merely from the dictates of common prudence, and is called into being, and continued in exercise, by the principle of natural kindness and the dictates of honor. These, however well they may serve some of the common purposes of life, do not put themselves forth from motives so pure, nor with emotions so warm, as does that benevolence which is truly Christian. This takes its character from that displayed by the Son of God himself, in coming into the world to save sinners. It estimates the value of the object on which its regards are bestowed, by its amazing capacity for bliss or woe,—by the astonishing efforts made to rescue it from infinite ruin. Thus it determines what should be the nature and extent of its own exertions in the behalf of an object so interesting. It acts with as much vigor amid the contumely and reproach of enemies, as when aided and encouraged by the smiles and co-operation of its friends. Moved by this divinely inspired principle, the Apostle proclaims the unsearchable riches of Christ with as much energy and joy, when surrounded by enemies about to drag him to prison,

or to death, as when at Jerusalem or Antioch he is hailed by hundreds of happy disciples as the harbinger of mercy.

He saw, even in his persecutors, the image of God, though in ruins; and of every one of them, his philanthropic heart was wont to say, this is the purchase of our Redeemer's blood. His benevolence was *extensive in its regards.* It knew no limits, and in so far as his efforts in the behalf of man were concerned, it levelled all distinctions;—the Barbarian, the Scythian, the bond and the free, he considered as having alike claims upon his disinterested efforts. The extent of his commission made the world his parish, while his affectionate bosom cherished emotions of the purest sympathy for the woes of the whole sinning race. This was demonstrated by a long series of beneficent acts.

4. *His was a life of labor, and of suffering.* In common with his fellow Christians, he had to contend with the ills incident to a probationary state. Labors and sufferings distinguish our present mode of existence. These are the effects of the fall, and strikingly mark our moral degradation. It is a common but true saying, that the whole current of our moral nature, sets in direct opposition to grace. To stem this current, becomes the work of every Christian as soon as he enters upon his new and holy life. And this is the occasion of those peculiar labors and sufferings to which all the followers of Christ are subjected. None need indulge the hope to escape them; but all may reap the advantage of faithful, cheerful endurance under them.

Without speculating upon the process by which the virtues that now distinguish and adorn the Christian, are called into exercise and matured among holy beings; and how they would have been called into existence and matured in our first parents, in the garden of innocence, we may rest assured, that the evils and inconveniences which beset us at present, shall be overruled in behalf of the truly righteous, to the promotion of their present purity and happiness, and to augment their future glory. And thus is manifest, the wisdom of God, in making those very evils to which we have been subjected by the fall, contribute to our restoration.

The sufferings of the early Christians, have been proverbial, in all ages of the Church. The meekness and patience they manifested under them, alike show the power of divine grace to sustain an immortal spirit under the greatest pressure of bodily suffering; and affords an illustrious display of the excellence of that religion, of the truth of which, their lives were a living demonstration. These, in the nervous language of the Apostle, were those living epistles known and read of all men. But in his labors and sufferings *as a minister of the Lord Jesus,* the character of the Apostle receives its most striking illustration. To know these in their nature and ex-

tent, it is important to examine the evils and difficulties with which as a minister he was called to contend. The corruption of the human heart, has in all ages presented the most formidable barrier to the advancement of truth, particularly Gospel truth. It is the source of all the errors and vices which have blackened the page of history, sacred or profane. In his days, ignorance, prejudice, idolatry, infidelity, and all their kindred vices, were authorised by the long established practices of all classes in society; and in many instances were sanctioned by law. The prince of this world ruled in the hearts of the children of disobedience, holding in his iron grasp the dearest interests of the human race—giving direction to the eternal destinies of millions.

As soon as the Apostle began the work of preaching the gospel, he commenced an attack on these strong holds of sin. He pointed out the blindness and criminality of the Jews in rejecting the Lord Jesus as the true Messiah; he exposed the absurdity and degrading influence of idolatry to the Gentile; in one word, he began to show a world of sinners their guilt and danger. Immediately, they were in arms against him, and whatever worldly policy could invent, or malice dictate, or diabolical envy instigate, were put in requisition to defeat and destroy the work which he had so deeply at heart, and for the promotion of which, his life was consecrated. Then, was opened upon him a scene of labor and suffering scarcely without a parallel in the history of man. His work was peculiar. There was not aught in his preaching to flatter the vanity, or gratify the pride, or to authorise the voluptuousness and sensuality of the corrupt mass around him. He denounced the terrors of the law against sin, and the miseries of an eternal hell, as the portion of the finally impenitent. That his labors may be successful, it was necessary that they should be constantly reiterated. And doubtless, frequently, his most zealous and disinterested exertions, made at the expense of great bodily exhaustion, were rewarded with disappointment.

Such were the evils which the Apostle encountered; and that too, in a greater or less degree, through the whole period of his life. How arduous then must have been his labors! How great his sufferings! Look at the extent of his travels, the hazards of his shipwrecks, the malignity of his persecutions! His own recital of them is most affecting. 'In labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in death's oft. Of the Jews five times I received forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in wea-

riness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness: Besides those things that are without, that which cometh on me daily is the care of all the Churches.'

5. *His was a life of devotion to God.* His affections were most devoutly placed on God. He had beheld the glory of God shining forth in the face of Jesus Christ, and admired the harmony of the divine perfections, as displayed in his works, particularly, in the great work of redemption: and, while gazing upon this mirror, the glory that it reflected, changed him into the same image, from glory to glory. Having the eyes of his understanding open to these inspiring and heavenly perceptions, and his mind hallowed by their influence, it is not at all surprising that he should voluntarily consecrate himself to God. It was rather with him a matter of astonishment that God should accept an offering so poor, so unworthy, at his hands. Influenced by such views and feelings, what could he hold back? His devotion, therefore, was a voluntary dedication of his heart, his mind, and his whole life, to be or to do, whatever his Lord should dictate. His devotion was *rational.* It was based upon the highest reasons that can act upon the mind of man. His relation to God, as a being created, sustained, and redeemed by divine goodness —to whom he was amenable as his final Judge—his relation to his fellow-men, particularly in the office of a minister of the gospel—the immense results which were pending on his exertions in their behalf—and, at the same time, an abiding conviction of his own weakness, and of his entire dependence on divine aid, all show the propriety of his giving himself to God. Nor did the circumstance that his devotions were aided and sustained by supernatural influence, an influence directly from God, destroy in his estimation its rationality. No one more fully felt his own natural weakness,nor more freely confessed it. If he did anything acceptable, it was through Christ who strengthened him; if he joyed, it was in God; if he abounded in hope, it was by the power of the Holy Ghost. And was not this strength, joy, and power, supernatural? That is, over and above nature. Can that devotion maintain its undisputed claims to rationality, which admits of no such influence —which is merely the fruit of a virtuous education, or the result of a philosophical system of ethics—the feeble emotions of which are occasionally excited by the well-turned periods of a glowing rhetoric, or the mellowing strains of sacred music? We say with confidence, No! If our devotion be rational, it must be spiritual, like that of the Apostle.

His, was also *uniform.* Under the ever varying circumstances of his chequered life, he was the same devout man. The reasons for this may be found in the fact, that his devotion was the result

of principle. He could assign a reason for the efforts he made, as well as for the hopes he cherished. By the faithful discharge of every duty, particularly that of prayer, he was admitted to so intimate a fellowship with God, as to partake in a measure of his own immutability. The church ever found in him the affectionate pastor—the humble enquirer—the able and experienced guide—the rebellious sinner, his faithful reprover—the cause of Christ, its meek, but bold and zealous advocate. No doubt, the immense consequences which were in some very considerable degree suspended on his labors, furnished a consideration, which to him was of awful moment. The extremes of endless joy, or woe, he saw before every immortal being, to whom he addressed himself. He became all things to all men, if by any means he might be instrumental in saving some. He kept his body under, lest after he had preached to others, he himself should become a cast-away. Considerations like these, induced the uniformity which characterized his whole life. Here it may only be added, his devotion was *ardent*. Holy affection for Christ, the church he had purchased with his blood, and the souls he had died to save, occupied his undivided heart. This was not a feeble flame, nor could it be easily extinguished; but it shone with unremitting lustre through his whole career. Nor did the warmth of this holy affection abate under any circumstances, but accumulated in its intensity until through martyrdom at Rome, he was received up into glory.

6. *A most impressive view of the peculiar character of the Apostles life, may still further be seen, by entering into the meaning of his own words.* 'I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.' I am made conformable unto his death. That as Christ in the peculiar mode of his death, as well as in the dispositions he manifested under that most trying event, furnished an example of entire indifference to worldly honor, as well as to the dictates of worldly policy; a policy which might have achieved deliverance for one of less moral integriy; so I, by conforming to his example in these respects, am, like him, crucified to the world. To be applauded or reproached, is neither of them my choice. To both of them I am indifferent. Nor can I under the pretext of increasing my usefulness, descend from the unbending integrity of my principles, to increase my influence, much less barely to make myself important in view of the world. It is my duty to be conformed to Christ; and whatever of influence and usefulness, or of disgrace and suffering, may fall to my lot under the direction of his holy providence, cheerfully to receive; knowing, that whether I prove a savor of life unto life, or of death unto death, by my ministry, I shall nevertheless be acceptable and well pleasing unto God. This is all-sufficient for my comfort—this will cause the world, with

all its wealth and honors, to fade in my estimation: for 'Christ liveth in me'—the union I have with him is so close, and so assimilating, that it affords me a participation in his own nature—it gives character and vitality to all my spiritual emotions. From this source of life, flow all my tempers, words and actions; so that it is not I that live, but Christ liveth in me. I lose myself in him as a drop is lost in the ocean, and he has become my all in all. Whatever there is good in my heart, virtuous in my life, and beneficent in my efforts, it is not mine but Christ's: and the glory is all his due. The good of my fellow-men and my own happiness, are so immediately connected, and withal, are so identified with the glory of my Saviour, that for me to labor to promote the latter, is the surest and only way to secure the former. And in doing this, I only give expression to those inward emotions of gratitude and love, which warm, cherish, and delight my soul.

7. *His, was a life of triumph.* It may appear somewhat singular, that, considering the import of the preceding remarks, a sentiment of this character should be introduced. It may here be asked, how the deepest self-mortification, the most humiliating labors, the most cruel persecutions, and hazardous shipwrecks; performed and endured in devotion to the glory of another, can be reconciled with personal triumph? With many, triumph and worldly glory are synonymous; but, between them, there is no necessary connection. Indeed, have not those, regarded by the world as most triumphant, in many instances been subject to the most degrading vassallage? Were not the most celebrated heroes of antiquity slaves to their own ambition and lusts? While they subjugated nations to their iron dominion, and sported with the lives and fortunes of their fellow-beings at pleasure, were they not strangers to that true freedom of soul which dignifies the man?

The triumph of the Apostle was *spiritual.* It was victory over the worst of foes. Foes, whose dominion is destructive to the present, and eternal well-being of the undying spirit. His victory was complete, over the corruptions of the heart, the flatteries and frowns of the world, and those hosts of invisible malignant beings, who, 'walk the earth both when we wake and when we sleep.' It was a triumph of *holy joy!* It was his joy to know that God was his reconciled father, and that all his perfections were engaged for his support and protection. That Christ was his Saviour, and elder brother. That the Holy Ghost was his sanctifier, and indwelling comforter. That in consequence of this holy relation, he could approach the mercy seat with boldness and confidence; assured, that the adorable Majesty before whom he bowed, invited his approach, and was ever pleased to grant his request. On these,

and other accounts he could say, 'as sorrowful yet always rejoicing.' It was a 'joy unspeakable and full of glory!' It may be added, worldly triumphs are generally obtained at much expense of treasure and blood. Unlike these, the Apostle conquered only to bless! The territory he explored and subdued in his own heart, was afterwards brought under the highest moral culture, and produced whatever was lovely and of good report. The conquests he made among his fellow-men were bloodless. They were the triumphs of truth over error, virtue over vice, of happiness over misery! True, those thus conquered, were humbled; but it was only that they might be exalted to the ever-during honors of immortal life, in spotless purity, and ineffable glory at God's right hand.

8. It may be subjoined, *the Apostle's life was most extraordinary.* Explore, if you please, the volumes of antiquity, acquaint yourselves with universal biography, examine with minuteness the finest specimens of greatness and excellence presented by Plutarch. And where will you find another Paul? Designed for high and important services, he was favored with more abundant revelations. Some truths which the wisest heathen regarded as merely conjectural, and which the prophets saw only through the medium of a glimmering light, were with him awful realities. When caught up into the third heavens, he saw things, no doubt, which were indescribable, and heard those which were unutterable; and ever after, walked as seeing him who is invisible. Who but the Omniscient, can estimate the amount of good this holy man was the instrument of accomplishing. How many seals of his ministry were given him! How many souls he conducted to Glory! These will arise in eternity and call him blessed. And when the names of warriors, statesmen, and potentates are lost in oblivion, his shall be cherished in grateful and everlasting remembrance. It shall go down to the latest period of time, associated with all that is good and great in Christian enterprize. Wherever the standard of the cross is planted, and a church gathered to the praise of God's grace, there the story of the self-denial, the benevolence, the devotion, the labors and sufferings, the conflicts and triumphs of the Apostle, shall be exhibited as the demonstrations of what the grace of God can accomplish in and through one man: and also, for the example and encouragement of all who have obtained like precious faith. Yea, and in the recollections, and associations of another world; in the greetings and affectionate embraces of saints and angels: in their rejoicings and devotions around the throne, this extraordinary man shall bear a very conspicuous part. There, my fellow-Christian, if thou art faithful, thou shalt see and converse with one so honored of God, and so endeared to glorified beings. Let it be thy

constant endeavor through grace, to acquire a spotless soul, that thou mayest be qualified for so holy, so interesting an interview.

II. *To examine the principles, from which this extraordinary life proceeded.* It has been well remarked, that 'principles are the primary elements of character.' The character of every man, in a greater or less degree, may be attributed to those instructions and principles previously adopted. This sentiment is as philosophical as it is scriptural; and to be deeply impressed with its truth and importance, is indispensable to the faithful discharge of the duties which grow out of the various relations of life. In the Bible, the earliest and best authenticated history of the human race, God made it the duty of parents to instruct their children in the great truths and duties of religion and morality. The same divinely inspired book, declares that if a child be brought up in the way he should go, when he is old he will not depart from it. God works by means in the moral as well as in the natural world. The good seed of the kingdom must be sown, it must be cultivated with vigilance and care, if the fruits of holiness be brought forth. And it is promised that labor, thus bestowed shall not be in vain.

That there was something peculiarly efficacious in the principles, from which proceeded the life of the Apostle, is obvious from its very extraordinary character. To become experimentally and practically acquainted with these principles, is the duty and interest of every one. They are as efficacious now as they ever were. Innumerable instances might be adduced in which they have produced results of the same character, as those in the case of the Apostle. Their influence is as indispensable now as they were then, for all mankind are in the same condition by nature. Where all other principles fail to afford relief, to the despairing sinner, these come to his help. They assure him that he may, and they direct how he may be counted just with God

In order to see more forcibly their efficacy, an inquiry into the condition to which man is reduced by sin, is necessary. Our view of the efficacy of these principles, will be in exact proportion to the degree of degradation, which we attach to the fallen condition of man. The truth of this remark is confirmed by the fact, that those who deny the depravity of human nature, in general make but little account of the means of its recovery. On this point an appeal to the Bible is all important and all-sufficient. This teaches that man is unholy, guilty, and helpless. The declaration, that Adam begat a son in his own likeness, as contra-distinguished from the likeness in which he himself was originally created—the fact that he was driven out of Paradise and debarred from the enjoyment of those privileges, by which he was distinguished when innocent—particularly that of communion with God the fountain of all good, demon-

strates, that some great change had taken place in his moral character, that he was no longer disposed to relish nor capacitated to enjoy, the pleasures of innocence and holiness. That by the transgression of the divine prohibition Adam made himself guilty none can deny. But how this his personal act, could constitute his posterity sinful, has been a subject of much discussion. It had been well for the Christian Church if theologians, when they could obtain no further evidence would content themselves with facts. The fact is, man universal man, is sinful and depraved. The history of all ages and nations demonstrates this to be true. Its universality can only be accounted for by admitting an original sinful taint, or *depravation* by the fall. Though it may be a digression, yet it may not be improper to stop a moment, to look at the condition of infants. In relation to them, a question frequently arises, Are they guilty? Not certainly of actual transgression, nor of the transgression of their progenitor. But they are unholy. This unholiness is, a want of conformity to God's law. With this want of conformity—without a change, can they enjoy the pure pleasures of Paradise? Hence the necessity of an atonement even for infants. This is unconditionally applied to all such as die under the age of accountability. In further proof of the depravity of children, it may be observed that all as soon as they come to the age of accountability, invariably choose to indulge their depraved propensities. Thus they make their depravity their own by personal choice. When adults do this, with all the aids which the gospel affords to the contrary notwithstanding, are they not as guilty as was Adam?

Inseperably connected with the depravity and guilt of man, and by consequence following it, is, his *helplessness*. He cannot help himself. Admitting he could perform works of righteousness acceptable to God for the present and future, this would not atone for past offences. But this from the perversity of his nature, and the impaired state of his natural powers, has become naturally and morally impossible. Therefore he can do nothing acceptably to God nor efficaciously towards his salvation without grace. Nor has it ever been proved that he is required to do it without. Evidently, the ground on which the gospel urges its immediate claims on the sinner now is, that of gracious ability. This ability is communicated through the influence of the Holy Spirit. It comes in the first instance unsought for and unasked; and as well as the atonement from which it proceeds, is all of the gratuitous favor of God. It came not in as an after thought with the Deity, which occurred when man had fallen, but is a gracious provision which was contemplated when the creation and redemption of man was determined. From the depravity, guilt, and helplessness of man proceed his liability to misery; the nature, extent, and duration

of which, can be best estimated by the nature, extent, and duration of that salvation, of which he is made a partaker by deliverance from it. This salvation in all its glorious fruition is eternal life, and of course the want of it is eternal death. So teaches the gospel, 'these shall go away into everlasting or eternal punishment.' It is from evils of this character that the gospel delivers us, through the influence of the principles brought to view in our text.

What these principles are, is now our duty to inquire. They are summarily embraced in the language of the Apostle, 'the faith of the Son of God.' The term faith is used in various acceptations in the scriptures. In our text it has more definite reference to that exercise of the mind and heart, by which the benefits of the atonement are received and applied. By which he who, until the moment when he believed was ungodly—was under the sentence of condemnation and exposed to the bitter pains of eternal death, is admitted into favor with God, adopted into his family, and made an heir to eternal life. He who exercises this faith cordially embraces the truth the will and the promise of God. The *truth* of God. He acquiesces in all the truths revealed in the Bible. He believes them on the authority of God. Whatever they state in regard to the character of God, his government, designs, and purposes; or with reference to the nature, condition and wants of man; and particularly of that great truth, the vicarious and propitiatory offering of Christ, which like the sun in our solar system, is the grand primary principle, to which all others are connected and on which they are dependent, is cordially received; and the penitent is assisted in his perceptions of these truths, by those views of himself which have been impressed upon his heart, by the convictions of the Holy Spirit. In that representation of the character of sinners, made in the gospel, he sees a full display of his own character. And by what he knows of his wants, he is persuaded that Christ is just such a Saviour as he needs. It is the invariable result of those divine influences, of which the penitent is always the subject, to induce that subdued temperament of mind, which is so highly favorable to the reception of truth: the want of it, is the cause of the rejection of the gospel in most instances.

Faith embraces the *will* of God, in whatever he enjoins or requires. It has appeared from what has already been advanced, that the Christian character commences with self-denial. Now God requires of every one who would obtain his favor, the renunciation of all sin both of heart and life; of all false hopes and the principles on which they are founded; an entire renunciation of self, all willingness to do or be any thing or nothing. In this there is a cordial embrace of the divine will. For the want of it, many persons, convinced of the necessity of true piety, find it so difficult

to believe. They do not entirely surrender their hearts to God, therefore they cannot confide in him. But when this entire surrender is made, then there is an embrace of the *promises*. These become the food of the soul, they include all that it needs for time and eternity. In pleading them on the ground of the great atonement, the true penitent finds them to be yea and amen. They are applied to meet his case—are fufilled to the joy of his soul.

In accordance with the above remarks, two considerations are distinctly to be observed, that faith is not only the assent of the understanding, but also the trust and affiance of the heart. This is perhaps the most simple, and at the same time the most complete definition of saving faith. It is a sure trust and confidence in God, that He has for Christ's sake forgiven our sins and received us into his favor. This exercise is never made without the special aid of the Holy Spirit. It is a faith of the operation of God, and is most surely the gift of God. But it is the gift of God in such a way, as not to infringe in the least on man's moral agency. All the means of faith, and the very ability to exercise it are the gift of God, but the act of believing is the creatures. In the possession of all the means and ability, he may nevertheless not believe; and thus abuse heaven's mercies to the accumulation of his guilt; and if he continue to disbelieve to the aggravation of his future misery. There is no natural or moral necessity for this unbelief. It is true, that considered without grace, the sinners natural powers would never be adequate to this exercise, but grace comes to their aid; and so far as moral ability is concerned, with a correct disposition, if grace is yielded to, cherished and followed, it induces the disposition. Thus the sinners natural and moral powers are employed through grace in the exercise of faith, his freedom and responsibility are secured, his soul is saved, and all the glory belongs to God.

With this faith spiritual life commences, by the grace it supplies, it is continued. 'The life that I now live is by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.' There were three considerations which seemed to bear with an almost tremendous weight on the mind of the Apostle. The dignity of the character of Christ—the nature and strength of the love he manifested in the gift of himself—the unworthiness, criminality, and misery of the being on which this love was bestowed. In the character of Christ he beheld not only all the fullness of God, that is all the fullness of his love; but all the fullness of the *Godhead* bodily, whatever attributes and perfections dwelt in the Godhead, were found in Christ. He beheld this ineffable being descending from the stupendous heights of his glory, clothing himself with humanity, that he might give himself a vicarious offering for the sinner. If the nature and strength of his love be estimated by the dignity of his char-

acter, how divine! how immense! If he were but a man, then his love was only the love of a man; if he were an angel, then his love was only that of an angel, or if a superangelic being however highly exalted, it was only that of a creature, but if he were truly and properly God, then it was the love of God. The feeling of profound awe and gratitude in the Apostle's mind, was augmented by a consciousness of the inferiority and criminality of the object on which it was bestowed. Who loved me and gave himself for me. The thought was overwhelming. It clothed him with humility. After such a stoop in his Divine Master, he could conceive of no stoop too low, no sacrifice too great. Doubtless, ever after, this consideration acted upon his holy and enlarged mind, with mighty force. It was as a mighty impetus within, propelling him forward in his christian course. To experience, to fathom, to develope, and to proclaim the amazing depth of this love manifested by the Son of God, in the gift of himself, was the joy of his heart, the work of his life. From this faith, which apprehended his bleeding, agonizing, and dying Lord, proceeded all those fruits of love to God, benevolence to man, and devotion to the cause of Christ, which he so eminently manifested; and by constantly relying on the efficacy of his all atoning merits, the vital principle of spiritual life was preserved; it was in him as a well of living water springing up unto everlasting life.

But in a more general sense, his life was by the faith of the Son of God. It was in accordance with the principles, taught aud illustrated by our Lord's sermon on the mount. In this remarkable discourse the Saviour teaches what man ought to be, and what he ought to do,—what ought to be the affections of his heart, and the actions of his life. It is here proper to observe that the great law of God's moral universe is love, supreme love to God, and subordinate love to all his intelligent creation. This is the great controlling principle in the heavenly world, binding all holy beings to God their proper centre. The exercise must be perfectly agreeable to the natural constitution of man, and of all intelligent beings; and we can conceive of no principle more conducive to the happiness of the moral universe. It was impressed upon the heart of man, when he came out of the hands of his Maker. It was lost by the fall. The design for which the Saviour came into the world, as well as all the institutions of his gospel, was to restore in man what he thus lost; and bring back this revolted province of Jehovah's Empire, to allegiance to its rightful Sovereign. This will not be done, until this great law of our moral world is universally obeyed. The principle of holy love put forth in all its legitimate results, would be an exemplification of all the virtues taught by our Lord. It renders to God his due—the devout and grateful homage of the

heart; it produces all those dispositions of mind, which promote the welfare and happiness of the human race. These as we have already seen, were strikingly exhibited by the Apostle, and in this respect he lived according to the faith of the Son of God.

The efficacy of faith may be still farther illustrated by observing the fact, that it removes in a great measure the veil which hides invisible things from our view. It is the connecting link between the things of time and those of eternity. By it the mind is brought into contact with an immense range of objects of thought and contemplation; objects of the sublimest character: with which angelic natures are intimately conversant, constituting no small part of their happy employment. It is highly probable also, that when in a state of innocence, man had a more correct knowledge of the invisible worlds, than he has at present. In the perfection of his nature, in the strength of his faculties both of body and mind, he walked abroad in the visible creation, beholding and admiring, wondering and adoring the stupendous works of the Creator. As his affections had not yet been polluted, nor his mind beclouded by sin, he saw God in all things. He then most truly 'looked through nature, up to natures' God.' However sublime and wonderful, and fitted to captivate and detain the mind in its contemplations, the scenes in nature were; they were not allowed to exclude their Divine Author; but rather were made subservient to a more vast and glorious view of his character: a view at once overpowering and enrapturing! But these views of the Deity, his intimate converse with, and the happiness consequent thereupon, man lost by the fall; and ever since that period, his posterity have been inclined to worship and serve the creature more than the Creator; to be taken up with second causes rather than the first, the great and glorious cause of all things.

In what peculiar manner the Deity manifested himself to the innocent pair in Paradise, and how he manifests himself to sanctified spirits on entering eternity, to us, at present, is only conjectural. But we may be authorized in the belief, that the manner will be adapted to the state of the faculties, and at the same time calculated to enlarge, delight, and enrapture the soul. The saints on earth behold God in Christ reconciling the world unto himself; they behold the glory of God shining forth in the face of Jesus Christ. It may be that the first displays of God, made to them in heaven, will be through Christ.

By faith, the momentous concerns of eternity are brought to bear directly upon the mind with all the force of vivid reality. The gospel is peculiar for the motives to piety and holiness which it presents. Some of the more important of these are drawn from the retributions of eternity. The joys of heaven and the miseries of hell. The duration of which is to run parallel with the existence of

the Deity. The same terms are employed to express the one, as to describe the other; and it is doing violence both to scripture and reason, and to all correct principles of interpretation, so to explain them as to do away their eternal duration. The influence of these great considerations, is indispensable not only to the commencement, but to the continuance of piety. They have their most efficient action on the holiest minds. However pleasing it is to contemplate, and however desirable to have believers brought to the exercise of disinterested benevolence, it is evident, both from experience and from the scriptures, that it was never designed that these motives should lose their influence. The 'recompence of reward,' is held forth as an inducement to christians. They are taught to be solicitous that they receive a 'full reward.' While by the terrors of the Lord, the Apostle persuaded men. Thus faith takes hold upon the awful retributions of eternity; it keeps them definitely before the mind, and affords a constant supply of motives, of the most influential character: and in exact accordance with the strength of its exercise, will be the efficiency of their operation.

Faith supplies that important desideratum, so long needed in the moral world, to raise man from his deep degradation, and introduce him to the knowledge, favor, and love of God. Hence, the importance attached to it in the scriptures. 'Without faith it is impossible to please God.' How various and contradictory the opinions which have existed, in regard to the character of the Deity! How true that the world by wisdom knew not God! The way, and the only way to obtain this knowledge, is to embrace in faith that revelation which he has given. When this revelation shall be universally received, and its principles universally adopted:—when its great truths and motives, exert their designed influence upon the hearts of men, then the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters do the great deep. To cultivate and bring to maturity the exercise of faith, was the design which our Saviour had in view in all his instructions to his disciples. For no one fault did he so frequently reprove them, as for the want of faith. No excellence in them received more decisive tokens of his approbation, than their faith.

Faith recognizes the great doctrine of providence, and renders it subservient to the piety and happiness of the Christian. It sees the hand of God sustaining, guiding and controling the vast whole of the universe; multiplying and supporting innumerable myriads of beings of various orders and descriptions. How consoling to be assured of this great truth! How heart-chilling and absurd the notion, that nature in her various departments, beautiful arrangements, and complicated machinery, was brought into existence by blind chance, and is dependent on that for its continuance. Universal

providence, is but another word for the all-pervading presence of the Great Eternal. It is however in the events of the present life, that faith renders the doctrine of a particular providence especially subservient to the happiness of the believer. Many events are of a dark mysterious character, calculated to try the patience, and indeed, all the graces. But the hand of God is seen in all these, directing them to the accomplishment of the most beneficent purposes; assuring us, that all things shall work together for the good of the Christian, while with gentle resignation, he pursues the even tenor of his way, believing that

> 'God nothing does, nor suffers to be done,
> But we would do ourselves, if we could see,
> The end of all events as well as he.'

Thus faith, regarded as the instrument of justification, as the means of commencing, continuing, and giving the very character to the Christian's life; as the means of opening to the mind the realities of the unseen world, and thus bringing an eternity of most momentous interest to exert its mighty influence upon the human heart; and still farther, by apprehending and applying the doctrine of an universal and particular providence, or in other words, placing God directly before the mind, Who is over all, and in all, and through all, is a powerfully influential principle. By it, man is conscious of the true dignity of his character, feels that he is immortal, and sees nought on earth worthy of his regard, compared to the destiny to which he is approaching. It was the influence of this principle, which gave such peculiar excellency to the character of the Apostle. A few considerations by way of improvement shall conclude this discourse.

1. *We are taught the true dignity of the Christian character.* Whether we regard the principles upon which it is formed, the beneficent influence it exerts, or the glory it brings to God, it challenges a contrast with all others. It is a copy of the example of Christ. It is the possession of holy affections and the performance of holy actions:—as cheering in the exercise, as they are good in their influence. Such an one is peculiarly prepared to meet all the events of the present life. Are they adverse? They are made subservient to the perfection of the graces, to a completion of a meetness for the inheritance of the saints in light. Are they prosperous? Do they put the Christian into the possession of wealth, talent and influence? These are consecrated to God, in the advancement of his cause, in the promotion of his glory, and the good of man. The sacred employments of piety and beneficence, are the delight of his heart. And they demonstrate that he is either already qualified, or fast ripening for heaven; But the true dignity

of the Christian character is never more conspicuous, than in the hour of nature's dissolution. This is the good man's shining place. Here, while nature is laid in ruins, he triumphs over his last enemy. Calm, collected, and joyful he meets the event; resigns his body to the grave in sure and certain hope of a future glorious resurrection. But to know the completion of this triumph, it is necessary to go a little beyond the bounds of time,—to enter 'quite on the verge of heaven,' and behold the enraptured spirit in its introduction to the abodes of light. While an escort of holy beings conduct it to the throne of God, where it casts its crown at the feet of Jesus. It now joins in an anthem which shall never end: and the arches of heaven again reverberate the joyful intelligence that another has escaped the pollutions of the world, and entered upon the joys of Paradise.

2. *We are taught the efficiency of Christian principle.* The degeneracy of man has been seen, acknowledged, and deplored by the wisest men, in all ages. Various theories have been invented to account for its origin, and also to provide the means for our recovery. But these in general were as erroneous in their suppositions, as they were inefficient in their application. And they evidently proved the need of light and help from God. Some of the best heathens fondly anticipated the period when the Great Author of nature, would give a revelation to his lapsed children. Even since the introduction of Christianity, infidelity, in various forms, and at different times, has made an effort to prove its ability, to raise and elevate the human character; but every effort has only manifested its puerility and afforded the demonstration that it is worse than vain to leave the oracles of God to follow the feeble light of reason, and the bewildering speculations of a false philosophy. If therefore, there were no obligations of duty, it would be our wisdom and interest, to adopt that system of holy truth which God has given. It bears upon its every feature the impress of its divine original. It points out the origin, the nature, and the extent of our moral disease; and it also provides the means of our cure. In addition, it has exhibited the living demonstration of its power to restore man, measurably at least, to his former dignity. Its living epistles may be known and read of all men. One most illustrious specimen we have seen in the character of the Apostle Myriads have already, with him, been translated to their permanent abode. Multitudes are still on their way; who by faith have been introduced into this grace wherein they stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

3. *We are taught the folly, criminality and danger, of attempting salvation in any other way.* It is but a plain dictate of reason, that God, who must be perfectly acquainted with the condition, to which man has reduced himself by sin; and with the relation that

he sustains to the moral government of the universe, must also be qualified to know what are the most proper means of his recovery. The means which in infinite mercy he has devised and appointed, when understood, approve themselves to the heart and conscience of every humbled sinner, and demonstrate the wisdom of their adaptation. They come to him with proposals of mercy, on the most feasible conditions. They require that he should feel and acknowledge himself to be a sinner—that he has justly merited everlasting banishment from God—that he should renounce his unrighteous and his righteous deeds—that despairing of salvation in every other way, he should come in the spirit of true contrition, and plead in faith the virtue of the atonement. This is the gospel plan of salvation. It is of divine appointment. Is sanctioned by the authority of the great God. All who ever were saved, were saved in this way. To reject this method, and adopt any other is *foolish*; for all others have failed, and they must fail. It is *criminal*. Because it slights the mercy of God, despises his wisdom, and rejects his authority. It is *dangerous*. It is done at the peril of the soul. He who does this, rejects eternal life; and exposes himself to eternal death. Be assured, whoever thou art, that every day thou livest in the rejection or in the neglect of this method of salvation, proposed to thee in infinite condescension, thou art lessening the probabilities of thy future happiness, and multiplying those of thy ruin. Believe, I beseech thee, the gospel representation of thy condition. See, feel, deplore, and acknowledge thy native vileness, the guilt of thy actual sins, particularly the sin of unbelief; the demerit of thy best performances, and be saved by grace through faith. And thou shalt live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved thee, and gave himself for thee. Thou shalt live a new and holy life on earth, which shall ultimate in thy eternal glorification in HEAVEN.

SERMON VI.

A CALL FROM THE HEATHEN.

BY REV. HIRAM H. WHITE,
OF THE NEW ENGLAND CONFERENCE.

Delivered before the Young Men's Methodist Foreign Missionary Society, at the Bennett Street Chapel, Boston.

'And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There stood a man of Macedonia and prayed him, saying, come over into Macedonia and help us.' ACTS xvi, 9.

THERE is something peculiar to the influence of Christianity in removing the natural selfishness of the human heart. Instead of rendering its possessor contented with his own attainments, and satisfied with enjoying the richest of blessings, it no sooner fixes its seat in the heart, and spreads its influence through the soul, than a strong desire is begotten that others may partake of the same joys and privileges. Its charity having no bounds, encircles the nations of the earth, and would if possible, strew the blessings of our holy religion in the paths of all men. Hence the burning zeal, that characterized the Apostles in spreading abroad to every land the Redeemer's name; hence the efforts the true church has been making through many ages, to propagate the doctrines of the Bible; hence also that mighty spirit that has been awakened and gathering strength in the hearts of Christians of every name for half a century past, whereby the gospel's light has been shed on many of the dark places of the earth. And now so great is the desire of many nations to receive the missionary of Christ with the Bible, that we may hear as from the four winds of heaven, 'come over and help us.'

Some of the ancients believed, that every nation has its guardian angel, some benevolent spirit, devoted to its happiness and welfare; and it has been suggested, that the man who appeared to Paul, in the visions of the night, was the guardian angel of Macedonia; that, moved with the knowledge of their wretchedness and moral darkness, he appeared in a human form to Paul, inviting and urging him to come over into Macedonia and help that people. This sugges-

tionis truly interesting. And may we not suppose that the guardian angels of many nations are now mingling in our assembly, hovering round us unperceived, and that if we turn a deaf ear to their Macedonian cry, they will be our accusing spirits at the tribunal of Him who hath constituted us stewards of the goods of this life.

In order to be prepared to listen, let us contemplate the condition of the heathen.

1. They are in a state of natural degradation. The polluted fountain that was opened in the heart of man by his first transgression, has sent forth its streams to every land and every clime under heaven; all flesh is corrupt before that God, who made man in his own image. God in the institutions of his mercy hath opened wide a fountain to wash this pollution away; but he hath distinguished the nations of the earth with respect to privilege. While the light of revelation discovers to some the nearest and best way to this lover of mercy, other nations, and those not a few, are left to grope their way in darkness. Out of eight hundred millions, the estimate population of our world, but two hundred millions enjoy the light of the gospel, leaving six hundred millions of our wretched race in ignorance and darkness. Why God hath thus distinguished the nations of the earth, we will offer no reasons, till some can be found above mere human conjecture. That they are thus situated we know, and we farther know, that help is asked at our hands. Their darkness and wretchedness are entailed from age to age. Son succeeds the father with the same heathenish soul—generation follows generation without a ray more of light to the land of death. The millions that death sweeps away this year, are equally benighted and depraved with those he swept away last year; and, if their condition changes at all, it is from dark to darker, from evening to midnight.

2. The heathen world are in a state of political degradation. In nothing is the difference between heathen and Christian countries more discernible, than in their governments. In one it is despotism; in the other freedom. It is true historians have given us glowing descriptions of the perfection of government and the liberty enjoyed by ancient Greece and Rome; but we presume to state it as an undeniable fact, that if these governments were compared with the worst in christendom, there would be a vast difference in favor of the Christian government. But how far have all other pagan nations sunk below ancient Greece and Rome. The princes of the heathen are generally noted amongst the worst for corruption and crime; their thrones are despotism itself; their sceptres are errors; their laws, if they have any, are a compound of folly and cruelty. There are millions and millions, who never breathed for a moment the mild air of freedom, never drank a drop from the cup of liber-

ty, or set one moment in security, under their own vines and fig trees. Kings are taskmasters ; nations are slaves. We need to breathe a whole year the foul suffocating air of a prison, to feel even the iron grasp of the Inquisition, before we are prepared to estimate the despotism of heathen governments. The fact is, the tree of liberty will not grow on the soil, which is not enriched by the doctrines of God's revelation. Christianity must soften man's nature before he is prepared to rule, or to enjoy freedom.

3. The heathen are in a state of moral degradation. Mingled with their immorality, is their inhumanity. The principles which have the most influence among us in forming man's moral character, are not known among them. That pity and sympathy the Bible inspires are unfelt. The picture which the Apostle has drawn us in his epistle to the Romans, of heathens in his day, is so appaling, fearful and disgusting, that not only does humanity weep over it, to think they are men, but its truth we should doubt, had not inspiration thrown in the darkest colors it contains, and guided the hand that drew it. The accounts we receive of them at this day show that their condition is not bettered by time. Survey the heathen world and you everywhere behold scenes at which shame itself blushes; and no terms sufficiently chaste can be found to describe them. Leaving the filthy Hottentot, who, in his natural state is like the swine in pollution and ignorance, with a mind enlightened with scarcely a ray of intelligence, having little that pertains to man, except the form, let us pass to the thousands that inhabit New Holland. Here we need only stop to notice one thing, that with them, the sweetest food, the most delicious fare, is the flesh of a human enemy. We then pass to the more refined nations of India and China. There you may behold a son murdering a father, or the mother that gave him life and nursed him, merely because they have become too old to support themselves. In India you may yet see, with what indifference and inhumanity, a mother can thrust from her arms her first-born and smiling infant to be devoured by the river god, the crocodile. At a short distance may be seen a funeral pile, where a living wife is consuming with the body of her dead husband. Near the principal city, the car of Juggernaut rolls on, in its track of blood, crushing to death the devotee of its unhallowed religion. Go to the islands of the Sea, or to the Indians of the north, and they have but one character. And it has been said, that you may search the vocabularies of every heathen language, from the Islands of the southern ocean to the tribes that encircle the northern pole, and in very few languages will you find any term that answers to our word *morality*. They do not know the import of the term.

4. The heathen are in a state of spiritual degradation. This is

what marks their character most fatally. We have hitherto viewed them in relation to this life, as ignorant, enslaved and immoral. But we come now to view them in a more affecting point of light, as immortal beings; as standing in near relation to the Creator of all;—as journeying with us to the destinies of another world. But, alas, God in his perfections is unknown to them; few of them believe in the immortality of the soul or expect a resurrection of the dead. Though God hath so loved the world as to give his only begotten Son to die, yet this glorious truth hath never reached their ears. Though life and immortality have been brought to light in the gospel, yet it hath never spread its glories to their view—though the Sun of Righteousness has arisen to dispel the darkness of nature's night, yet it is dark night with them still. Its light hath not chased their clouds away, nor illumined the valley of the shadow of death, in which they dwell. The plague wasteth in darkness, and the pestilence rageth at noonday; yet there is no gospel hope as balm to be applied to their hearts in the distressing hour; there is none to strip death of his terrors, or disarm him of his sting. When our friends are borne away by death, we rejoice in the prospect of immortality. Death loses its terrors in the consideration that it is not the end of man. But think how many poor heathens enter the gate of death, into impenetrable darkness—plunge into a night, that to their view has no star, no moon beyond it.

But what is most affecting is their gross idolatry. Here is degradation indeed! To see millions of rational beings, having souls capable of honoring and loving a perfect God, who stamped man's soul with His image, bowing down before an unshapely block of wood, or prostrating themselves to a rudely graved stone, worshipping even beasts and serpents and devils, saying these are our gods; or if their religion teaches them to soar far as the burning sun, or the fair moon, or twinkling stars for gods, yet they have no thought of that heaven that lies beyond the sky, or that hell that gapes beneath, or that God that has inscribed his name on all. And then add the licentious rites and obscure ceremonies practised by them Who would not weep over them, and listen to that earnest and imploring voice, 'Come over and help us.'

5. Their is one state of hopeless degradation without foreign aid. This is yet another darker color to this picture, another ingredient thrown into the composition of their wretchedness. Not that all heathen must perish eternally without the gospel; but, that they cannot recover themselves to civilization, morality, and a knowledge of the true God. All experience and observation on this subject prove this. Where is now the nation that has recovered itself from heathenism by its own inherent power, without the aid of the gospel of Christ? Such a nation does not exist. To what nation has

the gospel been carried by the winds of heaven, or by an angel from God? Has it not been put into man's hand by God, saying, Go into all the world and preach it to every creature? What has tamed the savage nature, and turned the lion into a lamb, and raised to civilization the most debased of human kind among the Indians of our country? I answer, the missionary.

6. What has wrought such wonders in bettering the conditions of the inhabitants of the South Sea Islands? The gospel of Christ. Great moral changes have taken place among many other nations, but in no one instance, without foreign influence. God works by the use of means. Christendom must help the heathen, or their condition is hopeless. There they must grope in darkness, till we carry them the lamp of revelation. There they must lie wounded and bleeding, till the missionary shall point them to the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world. There they shall wander, till the hand of charity shall gather them into the fold of Christ. On themselves they can have no dependence, for the world by wisdom never found out God.

II. We proceed to remark, that this representation presents powerful claims upon the sympathies and liberality of various classes of the Christian public. A cry is heard, come over and help us!

1. It has its claim on the patriot and philanthropist. Yes. Put out of consideration the immortality of the soul, the retributions of another world, and it will not divest it of interest to every lover of liberty and mercy. The true philanthropist is not the lover of his country only, but regards himself as a citizen of the world, as a member of the family of man at large. The patriot not only holds dear the liberties of his native land, but he desires to break the arm of despotic power every where. The assertion needs no proof, that the blessings of our freedom, morality and kindness, are not enjoyed among any other people.

Where the gospel has not been published, man's wayward and cruel nature, his overwhelming passions and destructive pride unfit him for a righteous administration of government. Therefore, every one who would wish to send the blessings of civilization, freedom and peace to the wretched and debased heathen is interested to send the Missionary, with the Gospel of Christ. How many patriotic and warm hearts there are, throbbing with intense interest for those nations within the bounds of Christendom, who once tasted the sweets of liberty and independence, but have been brought low by tyrants and oppressed by despotic power. Who has not wept over Greece? Who has not bled at heart for Poland? yet, alas, who has even thought or sighed for once over nations in heathen lands, who groan under oppression more cruel than that of the haughty Turks, and are bleeding in the fangs of arbitrary power more fearful

than those of the 'eagle of the North?' How many hearts a few months ago, were beating high for the liberties of Poland? Had they power, like Omnipotence, they would have hurled thunderbolts at the Emperor of Russia, and would have breathed a resistance over his host in arms, as destructive as that of the angel of the Lord in the camp of Assyria. But who is there, even to lament over six hundred millions of heathen, groaning under temporal and spiritual bondage pining and wasting under the power and tyranny of the prince of darkness, yet more relentless and unpitying than the tyrants of this world! These are our fellowmen, demanding our aid. Let then every lover of man and his happiness reach out his helping hand to carry to them the blessings of civilization and freedom.

2. The condition of the heathen has claims on the mere moralist. Those who place the welfare of mankind, both for this life and that which is to come, in mere outward morality cannot feel uninterested. We have already represented the gross immorality of those nations where the Bible has not gone, and that morality is not even known in name among many nations of the earth. Can the moralist behold their wretchedness and inhumanity with cold indifference? Can he think of infants and aged fathers and mothers being murdered, with impunity? Can he think what thousands of wretched mothers are so completely under the power of an unnatural superstition, as to give their infants, even from their bosoms, as sacrifices to dumb idols? Can he consider that multitudes can smile at the agonies of a mother on the funeral pile, and that altars smoke with human sacrifices to devils? Can he number the multitudes, that annually perish on their pilgrimage to the seat of the Great Idol of India, and from the rolling of his car leaves a track of human blood? Can he think of human beings used as bullocks for the slaughter and contemplate men, feeding on the flesh of their fellow-men? Can he think of all this and a thousand times more, and not pity and not aid in sending forth that Gospel, which inculcates the purest morality?

3. But it is to the true hearted Christian, that this cause makes its most powerful appeal. It may expect little of those, whose hearts are not warmed by the spirit of religion. Our religion is the product of missionary effort. We would not speak irreverently of our Blessed Saviour; yet we think we should not degrade Him, by calling Him with reference to His incarnation and visit to our world, a foreign missionary. He came all the way down from heaven to this lower world to open up the way to life and to publish salvation to man. The Apostles were all foreign missionaries. They preached Christ crucified to the heathen. We, therefore, by engaging in this cause, but imitate the Saviour, and the most illustrious Christians, that have gone before us.

The structure of the christian's soul is what also renders this subject congenial. The expanding principles of a benevolent religion, render his heart as capacious as the world. As once said a poor, but very pious man to a friend, whom he had invited to his scanty dwelling, my house is small, but my soul is as large as the world; so it is with the Christian. Though his means may be limited, yet, with what he has, he seeks to do good to the world.

The genius of our religion renders the pleading of this cause powerful with the man of God. It pleads, by the mercy of God, which was so high, as to bring Christ from heaven to die for him; which stooped so low as to rescue him from the deep pit of hell; which extends so wide as to embrace the whole human family; which stretches so long as to endure to eternity, and pleads with him by the death and intercession of the Saviour; by that soft, melodious voice of mercy which once whispered peace to his ruined, guilty, soul; by that kindling fire of love, that animates his heart and cheers his spirits; by the prospects, which are opening before him; by the consolations of religion in the hour of dissolution; by the light that shall illumine the dark valley of death; by the immortal glory, in which his soul shall be enwrapped in heaven forever: by these and ten thousand other moving considerations, this cause pleads with the christian. And will it thus plead in vain? Shall it not wake up that liberality of feeling, and arouse that holy charity, which, while it affords the means, shall cause him to say to the Missionary: Fly to the land of heathenism and tell my wretched fellow-men of that blessed Jesus, who hath bought with blood my soul; of that religion, that fires now my heart; of that book of God, which sheds a lustre on the dark path of death, and promises that "a day shall dawn on the night of the grave."

4. This subject appeals to the young. No where on earth has more care been taken in the education of the rising generation, than with us. We are highly exalted in privilege. We have been blessed with the kindest parents, who from infancy, have instilled into our minds principles of morality, and have led us up with the kindest hand in the narrow, but pleasant paths of virtue and religion. The sun of our existence rose auspiciously and it hath been increasing in brightness, ever since its rising. Life to us has its brightest charms and eternity its richest glories. Free and unshackeled in the enjoyment of every privilege, heart could desire, science expands our minds for permanent enjoyment and usefulness; and our holy religion safely guides us in the road to happiness here, and to eternal glory hereafter. And do not such privileges, and such enjoyments lay us under imperious obligations to do good to our fellow-men?

If habits of sympathy and liberality are to be formed in our char-

acter, how necessary, that they should be commenced in early life. How little probability is there, that the man, who has passed the season of youth, without forming such habits, ever will form them. How exceedingly hard is it to wake up the spirit of man, when it has once become settled in indifference to such subjects. Therefore the success of the cause of Missions depends upon the young. The few aged and middle aged, that have had their hearts in this cause, and their hands open to advance it, are passing off the stage. The youth must not only rise up in sufficient numbers to fill their places, but to augment the feeble hands, who are to have immortal honour in this work. Let us come up then my fellow youth, and grasp with a firm hand the standard, as it falls from our father's hand, palsied by death, and bear it before the host of Zion to rally her sons to the warfare against the gods of paganism, and the powers of darkness.

But let us consider what multitudes of young immortals, possessed of minds which are capable of indefinite expansion, and with the aid of science and religion might shed a glory on the world, are shut up in moral, mental night; while clouds and darkness are setting down on their hopes and prospects forever. But oh, what might not the gospel do for these youth, if its light could burst on their minds! What prospects would it open before them. When therefore you think of the care and kindness of your parents, of the instructions of a father, of the love and prayers of a mother; when futurity is brightened, with new glories, oh, then, think of the thousands of heathen youth doomed to degradation and wretchedness, and let your heart pity, and let at least a portion of what is wasted in pleasure and amusement, be thrown into the treasury of the Lord, to bear the glad tidings of salvation to the destitute youth of other lands.

5. The cause of Missions has peculiar claims on the female portion of community. We are aware, it has become fashionable in public addresses to solicit the aid and influence of the fair sex in almost every matter, and frequently it amounts to nothing more than bare compliment. But there is something more than bare compliment in this appeal. This subject presents considerations, that must twine around the tender heart of woman and draw forth all its sympathies. We have reference to the cruel slavery and bondage, under which the women are subjected to the men in all heathen countries. They are the drudges of the men, and are used more as beasts of burden than as companions. Their condition is desperate, and wretched, beyond description. If man is thought to have a soul, woman is never conjectured to have any; she is considered inferior in every respect. How different is the lot of woman in christian lands! Fostered from infancy with distinguished indulgence, educated with the kindest care, she is man's best companion, and his most constant

friend. In one land, their condition is a hell, in the other a paradise. And is there any common link of sisterhood between them, any tie that binds them as daughters of one family? Is it the Bible alone, that gives woman her proper place in society? Is it religion that controls, that tames the rude, tyrant spirit of man, and teaches him to use her with affection and kindness! Surely then there ought to be a deep interest felt in this cause by the female part of Christendom, wielding as they do a tremendous force of influence. And we fondly hope the day is not far distant, when with angel eloquence, every daughter shall plead with a father or brother, every wife with her husband, every widow with her friends, and every orphan with its guardian, in behalf of the cause of Missions. Yea, pardon us, if we express yet another wish, that the time may soon come, when the immense sums, expended through fashion and vanity for outward adorning, shall be turned into means for supplying the wants of the Missionary. When rings and jewels shall be converted into Bibles to be carried to the enslaved and benighted daughters of heathenism; with instruction to the Missionary, Go and plead by that sacred word with that mother, who has been taught, that she has a right to kill her female child, because she is poor, not to commit the fell deed. Go to that mother, who walks by the side of the Ganges, having at her breast a tender infant devoted as a sacrifice to the scaly monsters of the flood, and plead with her, by all that is fearful and affecting in God's book, not to make the cruel sacrifice. Go to the funeral pile, and persuade that widow not to ascend it; tell the orphans not to light it up. Or fly to Africa. Bear some consolation to that distracted mother or wife, whose son or husband has been stolen away by accursed white men. Let the lamp of revelation shine on her dark soul. Point her to that land beyond the grave where tyrants and thieves can never enter. Go spread every where that religion, which teaches, that woman's soul is immortal; distribute these Bibles which tell her she was formed out of man's side not to be trampled upon as a slave, but made a companion, which declare there is neither bond nor free, male nor female, all are one, in Christ Jesus.

We *now will* spend a few moments, in answering a few of the objections, that are so often made to Missionary operations and especially such as relate to foreign countries.

1. It may be well first to notice the old heart chilling objection, that may be brought forward by some in this case, for the nine hundred and ninetieth time," that " Charity begins at home."

' We are surrounded,' say you, ' with the afflicted and the poor, who demand of us sympathy and assistance and shall we turn away from the affecting entreaties of suffering poverty, from the wants of the orphan and the tears of the widows who are among us, and send the means of their relief to the heathen? We answer, by no means. Let

charity begin at home. Humanity, justice, mercy, everything that is good, urge you to deeds of charity toward those who are suffering around you. We remember the Gospel saith, 'If any man see his brother have need and shutteth up his bowels of compassion, how dwelleth the love of God in him? But the same gospel saith, in reference to another matter 'these things ought ye to do, and not to leave the other undone,' and we may apply it to this case. The wants of society around us ought to be met, and something ought also to be done to spread the gospel. We might show, that, as charity at home contemplates nothing more than the welfare of the body, but the cause of missions, the welfare of undying souls, there are reasons for a division of our bounty. But this we will not do. We will not take the bread from the starving poor around us, to send it to heathen. We ask, is not this Christian public possessed of sufficient wealth to supply all the wants of the suffering poor, and expend thousands on missions, without injuring themselves or families? But who are they, who are continually crying out, that charity begins at home, as if it must forever stop there? They are those persons, the record of whose home liberalities, is as meagre as poverty—stricken, as Pharaoh's lean kine. While, on the other hand, those who do most for the cause of missions, are those who do not forget the poor at home. The truth is, here are means adequate to both objects.

2d. Another objection is, 'we have heathen in our own country; we ought to convert them first to Christianity before we go to heathen lands'—It is true, that there are thousands of Indians in the north and west, to whom we owe much as a nation, and we rejoice, that much is doing for them, that glorious and unparalleled success hath crowned the efforts, which have of late been made to convert and Christianize them. But would it be obeying the injunctions of Christ, 'Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature,' should we confine all our efforts to them? Would it be following the order of the Apostles, who 'went out every where preaching Christ.' Had they staid in Judea, till there was not a heathen left, or a Jew unchristianized, the gospel would not have been preached to the Gentiles, till this day. 'The field,' says the Saviour, 'is the world.' The world is to be Christianized, and it matters not where we begin our attack first. But we must not confine our efforts to one point. Permit us to introduce the following illustration. In the southern and western states are large tracts of country called prairies, perfectly level, covered with the most luxuriant growth of grass. These, in the unsettled parts, are sometimes by the neighboring inhabitants set on fire and burnt over at certain seasons of the year, in order to destroy the dry grass, that it may spring up again, tender, for their herds to graze upon. Now if one hundred men were to fire one of these praires so as to burn it ov-

er in the shortest period of time, would they, in order to effect this, all assemble at one point to kindle one large fire and wait till it should spread from this one point over the whole? Would they not rather separate and fire it at so many different places, that the whole might sooner be burned over? Now the heathen world is one vast prairie, covered with a most luxuriant growth of error, crime and sorrow, and it is all to be enveloped in the shortest possible time, in the flame of Christianity. While our fellow Christians are kindling a fire among the Indians of Canada, others among the western tribes, some at the Cape of Good Hope, others in Northern Africa, some in India, and others in the far off Islands of the Southern Sea, and at many other different places, this society proposes to kindle yet another fire, believing that the heathen world will soon be enveloped in one flame of holy love to God. Who will not bid us God's speed in this good work?

3d. Another objection frequently brought, is, 'that vast sums of money have been expended on missions to no effect, and we might as well throw our money into the sea, as to give it to missionary societies.' One fact in this objection we acknowledge, that much has been expended to little or no purpose, and we most deeply deplore it. Needless and exorbitant salaries have been paid to agents, secretaries and Missionaries. Immense sums which have been given have never reached a heathen land. But leaving others to answer for their own faults, all we need to say, is, that the branch of the church to which we belong, can wash its hands in innocency from this sacrilegious deed, and the wonders that have been wrought by us, with the smallest amount of means, is a sufficient guarantee to the public, that we will not waste their money. But why have so many missions which have been established in times past, almost or altogether failed in their object? Was it not the mistaken opinion, that heathen must be civilized before they can be christianized? The doctrines of the cross of Christ have been withheld through fear that they might disgust their minds; principles of morality and civilization have been taught in their stead, and the consequence has been a complete failure. A gospel, without the cross of Christ, was found not to have any power in it. But, happily, this mistake has been corrected. Missionaries have learnt to go to the heathen with the Bible open in their hands, preaching Christ crucified, and have left civilization to follow as a natural consequence. Yes, they have learnt that they might as well try to overturn the Andes by throwing feathers against them, or to melt down a mountain of ice by one pale moonbeam, as to civilize truly a heathen, without converting and changing his heart.

4th. Another objection often brought forward is, that the heathen will all be saved without the gospel.

For the sake of argument, we will suppose they are all finally to be saved, and in answer then, to the objection, we say that God has commanded us to preach the gospel to every creature. He hath declared it shall be preached to every nation under heaven before the end of the world comes. This must be done by the agency of man. God has made it the imperious duty of all Christians to engage in this work, and to those who feel the weight of God's plain commands, it is sufficient to know that it is their duty. But there are other considerations than mere duty. If all who have not the light of the gospel, do at last arrive at heaven, they are compelled to grope their way over a road, that is both dark and rough. Who then out of mere benevolence to them, would not wish to provide a safer and more pleasant passage? If they can grope their way along by the feeble glimmerings of nature's fitful lamp, or a few rays of evening starlight, how much better would it be for them to have the broad and bright light of the sun, shining in its strength, the light of the gospel of Christ.

But Christianity delivers them from a thousand natural and moral evils, appertaining to this life. It elevates their characters, purifies their morals, and opens such prospects of futurity as cannot fail of exerting a glorious influence upon them in this life. It raises them from brutes to men, from demons to angels, and it is infinitely worthy of a benevolent mind to send them that gospel, which can make such wonders for them.

But it is not admitted that all the heathen are finally saved. Though multitudes of them do probably fulfil the general condition of salvation in spirit,—'Fearing God and working righteousness,' following the light which is given them, yet other multitudes are of such a character, sinning against the light of the world, that they will be excluded from a holy heaven. And if some are saved without the light of the gospel, who is prepared to deny that more would be saved with its light? We have abundant reason to believe, that many perish for want of greater knowledge. And who can tell, but that, while we are sitting down under the belief that the heathen world is safe, some of those thousands, whom death is daily bearing to the destinies of eternity, may accuse us to the Judge of all, as neglecting to save them though they were within our reach! Let us awake then, to send them the gospel, assured that it cannot but make them better in this life, and happier in the world to come.

If we have, though but hastily considered this subject on the ground of truth and duty, we may well congratulate the members of this infant society on entering on this glorious work; that you have had the boldness, the spirit, the zeal to raise your banner beside many others, though but the second in the ranks of our church, destined to be planted in foreign lands.

Let none withhold their aid in this cause, on account of the feebleness of its beginnings, or the uncertainty of success. The societies of other denominations, who have long had their missionaries in heathen lands, and other benevolent institutions, which have become sources of infinite good, and the glory of Christendom, were correspondingly small in their beginnings. There is an opportunity presented of doing the most good with the smallest means. If any wish to put out, at the most astonishing interest, the fruits of their liberality, let it be deposited here. Let us for a moment compute this interest. It is not only possible, but probable, that the benevolent offering of one person, may, in the future operations of this society, through the mercy of God, be the means of the conversion of one heathen soul, what a vast result is this! a soul, to adore around the throne of God forever! But this is not all. This one soul, by a life adorned with the graces of the gospel, and well spent in the service of Christ, may be the means of the conversion of ten of his countrymen: that ten, a hundred more: among that hundred, may probably be a minister of this gospel, and by a faithful ministry turn a thousand from darkness to light; among that thousand, other ministers may be raised up, other thousands converted, and so ever multiplying, as time rolls on, their countless numbers; but the day of eternity alone can reveal the whole amount of good.

This cause is not then a matter of experiment. To propagate the reviving and glorifying doctrines of the gospel among heathen, sunk as low as human nature can sink, buried as deep in ignorance and depravity as ever immortal spirits were buried, has long been successfully tried. And we have every possible reason to believe, that our holy religion is destined to overturn all the religions of Paganism, that it shall confound the priests, overturn the altars, and demolish the temples of superstition; that the humble followers of Jesus shall yet triumph over Hell's empire forever fallen among men. The God of nations is shaking the kingdoms of this world, and preparing his own way to go forth by the power of His spirit, with the missionary, to every land under heaven. Who will not take a part in this work, and gain the honor of fulfilling the high commands of God to spread the Redeemer's name.

Methinks I see the missionary of this society planting his standard on the shores of abused and benighted Africa. Unfurling beneath the propitious smiles of Heaven, it displays its inscription, wrote with blood, 'Behold the Lamb.' Dumb idols are forsaken—Christ is embraced—souls are saved. Looking yet again, Heaven opens. Yonder meet two spirits on the plains of paradise; they seem to realize some bond of union more than common spirits feel, and well they may. One is a donor to this society, and the other, a heathen, saved through its instrumentality. Are these the dreams

of imagination? Nay; I trust they will prove the realities of faith. I hope success will attend your first exertions, and that the first member of this society death sends to Heaven, will meet some heathen redeemed through its efforts. Then let the youth come up to the help of God throughout the land; and may some guardian angel from the desolations of heathenism, breathe a spirit of zeal into the souls of the youth embraced in the arms of the church, that the cause of missions may advance till the whole earth is filled with the knowledge of God.

POETRY.

THE MISSIONARY.

My soul is not at rest. There comes a strange
And secret whisper to my spirit, like
A dream of night, that tells me I am on
Enchanted ground. Why live I here? The vows
Of God are on me, and I may not stop
To play with shadows or pluck earthly flowers,
Till I my work have done, and rendered up
Account. The voice of my departed Lord,
"*Go teach all nations,*" from the eastern world,
Comes on the night air and awakes my ear.

And I will go! I may not longer doubt
To give up friends, and home, and idol hopes,
And every tender tie that binds my heart
To thee, my country! Why should I regard
Earth's little store of borrowed sweets? I sure
Have had enough of bitter in my cup
To show that never was it his design,
Who placed me here, that I should live in ease,
Or drink at pleasure's fountain. Henceforth, then,
It matters not, if storm or sunshine be
My earthly lot—bitter or sweet my cup;
I only pray, God fit me for the work,
God make me holy, and my spirit nerve
For the stern hour of strife. Let me but know
There is an arm unseen that holds me up,
An eye that kindly watches all my path,
Till I my weary pilgrimage have done,—
Let me but know I have a friend that waits
To welcome me to glory, and I joy
To tread the dark and death-fraught wilderness.

And when I come to stretch me for the last,
In unattended agony, beneath
The cocoa's shade, or lift my dying eyes
From Afric's burning sand, it will be sweet
That I have toiled for other worlds than this;
I know I shall feel happier than to die
On softer bed. And if I should reach heaven,
If one that hath so deeply, darkly sinned,
If one whom ruin and revolt have held
With such a fearful grasp, if one for whom
Satan hath struggled as he hath for me,
Should ever reach that blessed shore, O how
This heart will flame with gratitude and love!
And through the ages of eternal years,
Thus saved, my spirit never shall repent
That toil and suffering once were mine below.

TAKING UP THE CROSS.

The annexed feeling, and beautiful lines, are said to have been written by a young English lady, who had experienced much affliction. There is a devotedness—a spirit of religion running through it, which cannot fail to touch the most obdurate heart—

Jesus, I my cross have taken,
All to leave, and follow thee;
Naked, poor, despised, forsaken,
Thou, from hence, my all shalt be!
Perished every fond ambition,
All I've sought; or hoped, or known;
Yet how rich is my condition,
God and heaven are all my own!

Let the world despise and leave me;
They have left my Saviour too;
Human hopes and looks deceive me,
Thou art not, like them, untrue;
And whilst thou shalt smile upon me,
God of wisdom, love, and might,
Friends may hate, and foes may scorn me—
Show thy face and all is right.

Go, then, earthly fame and treasure,
Come disaster, scorn, and pain;
In thy service, pain is pleasure,
With thy favor, loss is gain;
I have called thee Abba, Father,
I have set my heart on thee;
Storms may howl, and clouds may gather,
All must work for good to me!

Man may trouble and distress me,
'T will but drive me to thy breast;
Life, with trials hard may press me,
Heaven will bring me sweeter rest.
Oh! 't is not in grief to harm me,
While thy love is left to me;
Oh! 't were not in joy to charm me,
Were that joy unmixed with thee.

Soul! then know thy full salvation;
Rise o'er sin, and fear, and care;
Joy to find in every station,
Something still to do or bear!
Think what spirit dwells within thee;
Think what heavenly bliss is thine;
Think that Jesus died to save thee;
Child of Heaven, canst thou repine?

Haste thee on, from grace to glory,
Armed by faith, and wing'd by prayer,
Heaven's eternal day 's before thee,
God's own hand shall guide thee there.
Soon shall close thy earthly mission!
Soon shall pass thy pilgrim days,
Hope shall change to glad fruition,
Faith to sight, and prayer to praise.—

SERMON VII.

THE DOCTRINE OF HUMAN DEPRAVITY; CONSIDERED IN CONNECTION WITH ITS PRACTICAL RESULTS.

BY REV. JOSEPH HOLDICH.

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'The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head, there is no soundness in it; but wounds and bruises, and putrifying sores; they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment.' ISAIAH i. 5, 6.

THIS is as affecting a description as could well be given of the moral and spiritual condition of mankind. No one, we apprehend, can suppose that it signifies a physical disorder, for it can scarcely be misunderstood in that manner. The evangelical prophet was manifestly speaking of the moral state of the Jewish people, and to illustrate this, he employs the figurative and energetic language of our text. It is not, therefore, the outward man he has in view, but the inward; not the body, but the soul; not the physical diseases of the former, but the moral disorders of the latter. But as we can form clearer and more definite ideas of those things which we take cognizance of by the senses, than of those which are the subjects only of abstract reasoning and intellectual observation, the prophet illustrates the condition of the interior man, by that of the exterior. He represents the soul in its depraved and sinful state, by a body under the ravages of a universal, loathsome, fell disease, which has spread itself over the entire frame, and presents nothing to view but an extended surface of putrefaction.

The passage may be applied to mankind in two ways, either individually or generally. It may signify that each individual person is thus morally diseased: or that it is the condition of human society in general. That the very heart, that is, the seat of the affections and moral powers, is faint; and the whole head, representing the intellectual endowments, is sick: and that it extends from the sole of the foot,—the lowest walks of life, to the head, the highest classes; and so through all the intermediate grades. In fact we are to consider it in both senses. It is true in the general, and it is

true in the particular. As the disease has spread over all the world, it has equally infected every individual in the world.

Some, however, have denied the general applicability of the text, and limited it exclusively to the Jews, to whom, we admit, the prophet, more directly alluded. But in describing this portion of our race, he has described the whole; for 'there is no difference;' we all sprang from the same parent stock, and are involved in the same moral calamity. This is the point, which it devolves upon us to establish. In doing so, we shall endeavor in the first place to exhibit the scriptural views of the moral state of mankind: Secondly, remove some objections to this doctrine. And thirdly, close with some practical deductions.

I. *The scriptural views of the moral state of mankind.* That we may not be misunderstood in our observations, nor appear to be striking in the dark, we at once express the conviction that the sacred oracles most explicitly teach the doctrine of the *total depravity of human nature*, a doctrine, by the way, which has been a fundamental article of faith in the Methodist church, from its origin to the present day, invariably and universally acknowledged by its authorities.

The first ground on which our belief in this doctrine rests, is, the scriptural account of the fall of Adam, and the subsequent propagation of the human race. The Bible informs us, that 'God created man in his own image,' which consists in 'righteousness and true holiness.' He was then a perfect and a holy being, having every passion subject to his Maker's will, every affection responsive to his voice, and every faculty exerted to the utmost in his service, which, at the same time, was the joy and delight of his heart, as well as the sole purpose of his existence. He was placed by his Munificent Creator in the garden of Eden, not in a state of luxurious indolence, but 'to dress and to keep it,' with light and graceful activity, and with an innocent and cheerful mind. Of the fruit of every tree in the garden he received free permission to partake, save one alone. This was 'the tree of knowledge of good and evil,' of which he was not to eat, under the penalty of death: 'for in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.' This is not to be regarded in the light of a merely arbitrary decree, but as a wise and benevolent institution. It served as a *test* of man's allegiance to his Sovereign, and as a salutary *memento* of his own dependance and responsibility. It was necessary as a subject of the divine government, that he should be placed under law, and it was *kind*, to set up an enduring remembrancer of that law and of its obligations and penalty.

In order to a correct apprehension of our subject, it is essential that we should distinctly keep in mind, that man was created a moral agent; capable, that is, of good and evil, with the power of choosing

between the two. He was made holy, but not immutable, nor under any manner of necessity or constraint. It is manifest, that on no other principles could he have evinced the spirit of true allegiance: for had he not been thus constituted he must have been a necessary agent, a passive thing, acting under a physical necessity, like a machine which is moved by some propelling power, and is incapable alike of virtue or of vice. Our noble epic poet, in his 'Paradise Lost,' has very well expressed this doctrine.

'I made them just and right
Sufficient to have stood, though free to fall.
Not free, what proof they have given since
Of true allegiance, constant faith and love
Where only what they needs must do appeared,
Not what they would? what praise could they receive?
What pleasure I from such obedience paid?

Consequently it was not consistent with man's nature by any constraint, or necessitating influence to prevent the Fall. Man being endowed with every requisite for perfectly obeying the law, was to prove his allegiance by *voluntary* service, or he could give no proof at all. Man, howeevr, did not endure the test of his fidelity. Satan tempted the woman, and she fell; she join'd her blandishments and persuasions to Satan's suggestions, and the man thus assailed also fell, in a great measure probably as Milton conceives, and as St. Paul seems to teach,

——'not deceiv'd,
But fondly overcome by female charms.'

Nor can the fall of man be fairly urged, as is sometimes attempted, as an evidence of man's imperfect nature. For without a *possibility* of falling, he could not have been a moral agent; and it is not conceivable that he could have been placed in any situation affording a suitable test of his moral power, in which his liability to fall would have been less. Nor, as we have before observed, could the Deity have prevented it, by any constraining influence without destroying man's moral agency, and thus frustrating his own design in his creation.

That man really did undergo a vast moral change for the worse, immediately upon the commission of this act, we need not now take time to prove. From the face of the narrative it is undeniably manifest; and we would refer you to the account itself, to discern the difference in the character of Adam, prior to eating of the fatal fruit, and subsequently to that event. Having been, in consequence of this rash act, expelled from Eden, the sacred history proceeds to trace the progeny of the disobedient pair. And here we have abundant evidence, that as the root was now become evil, so also

were the branches. Cain their first born was a fratricide; and Abel sufficiently indicated, by the sacrifices he offered, a sense of his natural and inherent depravity, and that his goodness was derived from the plighted atonement of the promised Redeemer. Of Seth, who from the death of Abel and disinheritance of Cain took the place of the First Born, the Spirit of inspiration testifies that he was begotten 'in the likeness, after the image' of his father;—a phrase which we understand in its scriptural acceptation, to signify similarity of moral character. This doctrine is supported by the voice of philosophy as well as by that of scripture. For while the one declares 'nothing can produce, what is not in itself,' and 'like only produces like,' the other recognizes the same principle when it says, 'who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one.' (Job 14, 4.) On this subject nothing can be clearer than the testimony of St. Paul, in the 5th chapter of his epistle to the Romans. Here he asserts that 'by one man sin entered into the world,' (v. 12:) 'through the offence of one many are dead,' (15;) 'by the offence of one, judgement came upon all men to condemnation,' (18;) and 'by one man's disobedience many were made sinners.'

The doctrine of our natural depravity, is abundantly corroborated by the moral history of mankind. It was but a short period comparatively, before 'all flesh corrupted his way on the earth,' and the earth was filled with violence, 'and every imagination of the thoughts of man's heart was only evil continually.' To such a height did the wickedness of man arise, that God, in his just and indignant retribution, cleared the earth of its inhabitants by a deluge of waters. We would have supposed that by this event man would have learnt to fear his God, and that the moral impression produced by it could never have been obliterated. But how soon did man's native tendency to rebellion show itself in the building of Babel? And when, from the increase of wickedness, the Lord selected one nation to be a peculiar people to himself; a repository for his name, his laws, and his religion; fenced them about with a hedge of rigid discipline, and singular customs, to keep them from blending with other nations, and being carried away with their vices; we should have said surely this people will show themselves worthy of the distinction conferred upon them! But how are we disappointed! What foul revolts, and severe punishments we read of, in their future history! How often were they visited with judgements from heaven for their sins, until at length they have become, 'an astonishment, a proverb and a bye word among all nations, whither the Lord hath driven them. And when we look beyond the Israelites to the other tribes of the earth, are we not still more shocked with the account of human vices. What is the whole tenor of history but a record of the crimes of mankind? Every page is stained by the

ambition of princes, the cruelty of tyrants, the desolations of conquerors, the intrigues of courtiers, and the more disgusting vices of private and humble life. And if we occasionally meet with a Cyrus or a Trajan, an Aristides, or a Cato, a Plato or a Socrates, we feel much the same agreeable surprise, that a traveller would, in discovering a verdant spot amid the arid deserts of Arabia. And, far as they fall below the standard of a christian character, yet are they the perpetual themes of infidel panegyric, and the dwarfish models of their imitation. And what is the natural inference from all this? Why that there is in man's heart an invincible tendency to sin, affinity to vice, that he is naturally and inherently depraved. We might account otherwise for a few isolated cases, or even for many such cases; but that all have gone 'astray even from the womb,' that 'all have sinned and come short of the glory of God,' and that too, under the superior light and obligations of the Gospel, and in despite of repeated warning and remonstrance from God's Holy Word to the contrary, prove that we are

> 'Sprung from the man, whose guilty fall
> Corrupts his race, and taints us all.'

2. The extent to which this corruption prevails in human nature, must now be the subject of a few observations. But let it be observed, that we are here to consider human nature, not under the meliorating influences of the Gospel, but as it is in itself abstractly viewed. The grace of God is certainly no part of our nature, and ought not to be included in our views when describing our natural depravity. For we are to consider man as an object of redemption, as a subject and recipient of those influences, and not as the original author of the virtues which those influences produce. If any should assert our incapability of regarding man apart from what is so entirely interwoven with his nature, we should meet the assertion with a denial. To us it seems just as possible, as to consider a canvass apart from the coloring of the artist, or to picture to ourselves a man divested of the intellectual attributes which form a part of his character. As we can, notwithstanding the actual combination and adherence, separate the parts from each other in idea, and consider each distinctly by itself, what are the attributes of the canvass without the painters skill, and what the peculiarities of a man without mental powers, so we may form an idea of what human nature is, without the grace of God.

With this understanding we hesitate not to avow our belief that the Scriptures assert it to be TOTAL; that, in our nature, 'there is no good thing,' that sin and only sin, is the birthright we inherit from Adam. 'The whole head is sick and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head, there is no soundness in it.'

We do not deny that many men, not professedly religious, exhibit amiable dispositions, and virtuous traits of character, that some men are much worse in moral conduct than others; and that but few reach the utmost verge of practical criminality. But all this, we apprehend, is not inconsistent with the doctrine we assert. For there are many influential motives to restrain men from sin and stimulate them to the cultivation and practice of virtue, without the slightest reference to religion or the will of the Supreme Being. Human institutions, worldly views; and selfish purposes, have vast influence upon the conduct and pursuits of men. And multitudes are restrained from the indulgence of their vindictive passions, or gratification of their craving appetites, by the voice of the public, and the fear of worldly ill, who have no regard for the authority of God, nor any respect for his religion. And yet such persons are fain to give themselves full credit for their virtues, as if they were really virtuous for virtue's sake, and as if the whole had its foundation in the fear and love of God. Besides, one great doctrine of the Bible, is, that God 'has wrought all our righteousness in us,' that 'it is He who worketh in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure.' And when in the book of Genesis it is said 'My spirit shall *not always strive* with man,' it is very evident, that so long as man is corrigible, the Holy Spirit does strive with him. This doctrine turns the scales upon our opponents entirely, and reduces them to the necessity of showing, why, if men are naturally holy, they are not practically so; and whence it comes, that although the Holy Spirit *strives* to lead them to piety, we still discern in them so little fruit of it. Upon our principles the wonder is, not that men in general have *some* virtue, but that they have *so little*. And the fact itself proves that the human heart opposes the strongest resistance to the holy motions and influences of the divine spirit. Let it again be recollected, that the question does not turn upon our human virtues, or merely moral conduct, but, upon our religious character;—upon our piety towards God. It was the design of our Creator that we should love and adore him; that his service should be the delight of the heart and the occupation of the life; that every passion, thought and desire, should be responsive to his voice, and obedient to his will. It is very evident, therefore, that so far as we depart from this, we are fallen from our original holiness and integrity. And it is also very manifest, that men may sustain a good worldly character and practice many human virtues, and, estimated by human standards, gain the eclat of a good name, for 'men will praise thee, when thou doest well to thyself,'—while 'God is not, in all his thoughts.' And this is the view which the scriptures, take of human nature. It is asserted in our text. It is asserted in Gen. i. 5. before the flood, 'every imagination of the thoughts of

his (man's) heart was *evil, only, continually.*' It is repeated in Gen. viii. 21. nearly the same in words, and quite the same in sense, and that too, when none but those who were deemed worthy of being preserved in the universal inundation were in existence. The words are, 'the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth.' The royal bard of Israel testifies, 'The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were *any* that did *understand and seek God.* They are *all* gone aside, they are all together become filthy; there is none that doeth good, no not one.' Psa. xiv. ii. 3. Jeremiah asserts, 'The heart of man is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked.' xvii. 9. The same doctrine is indirectly taught in all those passages which insist on the necessity of a change of heart, an entire moral renovation, before we can enter into the kingdom of heaven. For this reason, 'Ye must be born again;' put 'off the old man with his deeds,' and if any man be in Christ he is a new creature.' In those texts which we have cited, let it be observed, that they cannot, with any shadow of reason, be limited to any individual, or particular class or nation. They speak of MAN in the abstract, signifying all the family of man, they describe the moral nature of our species. This then is our character, by nature an enemy of God, indisposed to religion, devoted to the world, forgetful or negligent of eternity, living like an Atheist. They profess that they know God, but in works they deny him, being abominable and disobedient, and to every good work reprobate'—'by nature children of wrath.'

This then, is the conclusion, that man is entirely fallen and in himself totally depraved; and whatever good may now be in him, or performed by him, is owing entirely to the grace of God through the atonement of the Saviour.

II. *Having thus given the scriptural view, as we conceive it to be, of this doctrine, we shall, in the next place, answer some of the principal objections.*

1. We have heard the opponents of this doctrine urge, that 'the Mosaic account is absurd; for that so small and trivial an act as the eating of an apple, should be followed by such consequences is unreasonable, and therefore incredible.' Those who argue thus, have not duly considered the case. We have already observed, that man, being constituted a moral agent, an accountable being, it was necessary that he should have some test of his fidelity. The divine wisdom and goodness selected 'the tree of the knowledge of good and evil,' as suitable for the purpose, yet admirably mild and facile in its nature. Now it must be manifest that the violation of this test, must have partaken as much of the essence of sin, as any act of greater magnitude could have done. It was a transgression of the divine law, an act of rebellion against God, a spurning of his

authority, a disregard of his word and commandment. And if we judge the magnitude and importance of particular acts, by the consequences which result from them, which we apprehend is the correct criterion, we cannot conceive of one more important than this, which our opponents deem so trivial and insignificant. For the consequences were not concealed from the offender. He had been forewarned of them, and his guilt was aggravated by the weighty obligations of obedience which he thus violated. The very circumstance that the act was, in itself, a small one, rendered the test so much the easier, and he was therefore less excusable, than it it had been more severe in its character, and of more difficult performance. The objection of our opponents, therefore, defeats itself.

2. It has been urged by another class of unbelievers in this doctrine, that 'as Adam propagated his seed after receiving the promise of the Redeemer, and having been restored to the divine favor, that the effects of the fall were done away, and his offspring consequently partook of his restored rather than of his lapsed nature.' This argument is more ingenious than solid, besides that it has the disadvantage of opposing all those passages of scripture, which ascribe to Adam the origin of human depravity, with its manifold consequences. If this objection were founded in truth, every man is the originator of his own depravity. What sense, on this principle, could be made of those passages we have already quoted from the 5th chapter of Romans? And how can it be true that 'in Adam all die,' by 'one man's offence death reigned by one?' The argument then seems to lie between our objectors and the spirit of inspiration; for they cannot both be true. And whatever difficulty may be thought to exist in the subject, we certainly dare not seek to evade, by any metaphysical subtleties, the plain assertions of Holy Writ! And yet if we look at this objection a little closer, we shall not find such difficulty in it, as might at first be supposed. For although man was restored, we admit, to the divine favor, by the forgiveness of his guilt; yet, he never was restored to his primeval perfection. He still retained his fallen nature, and, consequently, his tendency to sin. Witness the facts that he was not restored to Eden, he was not allowed to 'eat of the tree of life' that stood in the midst of the garden; the earth no longer yielded its fruits spontaneously, but brought forth 'thorns and thistles' and had to be cultivated with 'the sweat of the brow;' that he became subject to death, with its sad forerunners, pain, sorrow, and disease. All these facts plainly show that man was not restored to his original holy and perfect nature. For it is impossible to believe that these consequences of the fall would have been inflicted and continued, if the fall itself had been perfectly counteracted. Consequently what-

ever holiness man subsequently possessed, was acquired and not inherent, it was by implantation or infusion through faith in the promised sacrifice of the Messiah, and not natural or inherant. Being therefore no part of Adam's nature, he could not communicate it to his posterity. They must receive it, if received at all, from the same hand, that he did, and through the same gracious medium; namely, faith, in the atonement of the Divine Redeemer. Thus we perceive that there is a beautiful harmony between the voice of reason and that of scripture, and that the attempt to set the one against the other, is only but an effort to separate what God hath joined together.

3. An objection which has been insisted on, with as much vehemence as any other, is, that 'it is inconsistent with the benevolence of God to make man thus.' But let it be remembered that this is no part of our system. Solomon in Eccl. chap. vii. verse 29. sets this in the proper light.' God made man upright, but they have sought out many inventions.' We were holy by his creation, we are unholy by an abuse of human free agency. So that we cannot blame God with our depravity, but Adam. Our objector continues, 'if he did not make us so, he suffers us to remain so, and I cannot see much difference.' This is indeed marvellous, as it holds to the supposition that their blindness is voluntary. The Divine Being may certainly *suffer* a thing to be done, without being chargeable with the guilt of doing it; otherwise he would be the author of all the sin that exists in the universe. Nor was he under any obligations, when man fell by his own voluntary act, to remove the consequences of his transgression. 'But why not,' says one, 'have destroyed the first pair, after their fall, and thus have prevented the propagation of a depraved species?' Suppose we should reply, we cannot tell; that undoubtedly God saw it would be most for his glory in the end, that it should be otherwise. This would be all the answer which could in justice be demanded of us. And yet a little more reflection may enable us to meet the objection more fully. First then: it will not be denied, we presume, that there were sufficient reasons for the creation of man at first. Secondly; we suppose it will not be questioned that man was made in the best possible manner, and on those principles of which, God most fully approved. To suppose that he might have been made better, would, in our estimation, be the same as to say that God did not make him in the best way; which would be inconsistent, with the Divine wisdom and goodness. Thirdly, we also apprehend, that man was placed in the most favorable, or suitable situation for the exercise of his free agency and moral powers. Now on the fall of man, suppose he had been destroyed,—things would have been in the same state that they were in, before man was created; and there

would have been the same reasons, so far as we can see, for creating another pair, as for creating the first. Suppose then, another pair had been created; constructed on the same principles, for God would not form him otherwise than in the best manner;—placed in the same situation, for it is not conceivable that he could have been placed in a better; what would have been the result? In all probability the same. Thus things would have reverted to the same original state again; and thus the same scene might have been acted over, again and again, and might have gone on *ad infinitum!* But in this case, there being no remedy, all must have been irretrievably lost. Seeing this to be the case, God preferred another method, more wise, and more kind; which was to permit man to propagate his species under a covenant of grace, whereby the ultimate consequences of the fall might be avoided, and man might regain his forfeited holiness and everlasting bliss. Be it therefore remembered, that though we come into life, in a depraved and fallen state, yet a remedy is provided at an immense sacrifice. Through Christ we may regain all and more than all which we lost in Adam. With this, accords the testimony of the great apostle to the Gentiles. 'Therefore as by the offence of one, judgement came upon all men to condemnation; even so, by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.' Thus again, 'where sin hath abounded, grace did much more abound: That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign, through righteousness, unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord.' If any, therefore, be ultimately lost, it will not be on account of their natural depravity which, through Christ may be healed; nor yet on account of Adam's sin which Christ has atoned for, but purely through their own fault and folly. Salvation is provided for them, and offered to them, by the Divine Redeemer; God wills that they should be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth, and their condemnation will arise from a voluntary rejection of these favors which they might have received. Where now is complaining? Who can charge God in this view of the case, with unkindness? It is man who is unmerciful to himself, and who alone can be blamed for the final perdition of his own soul. Oh that man would be merciful to himself! That 'he were wise,' and would no more 'charge God foolishly!'

4. The methods of accounting for the universal corruption of human morals, adopted by our opponents in this doctrine, are entirely unsatisfactory. Those most frequently urged, and which we shall briefly notice, are two, the power of example and the effects of bad education. But neither of these is an adequate cause. Example certainly cannot reach the case at all. For how could the origin of sin of any kind, whether internal or external, be owing to this cause?

What example, for instance, moved Cain to murder his brother? Who will say that anger and pride, with the selfishness and cupidity of our nature, were produced originally by example? Before vice existed, there was nothing but virtue in the world. With what appearance then of reason, can the origin of sin be ascribed to evil example? We might with as sound logic prove that the sun produces ice, snow, or fire; for it is the assumption of an effect not only with evil, but actually in contrariety to the cause assigned. To argue this point, however, is needless. Its absurdity is its own refutation. And the attempt to account for the continuance of vice on this ground, though with less show of positive contradiction, is scarcely less futile. For if we are by nature holy, who, the evil example being set, would be found to follow it? Much less would all. Or whence comes it, that evil example is so much more influential with us, than good? That this is the fact, is manifest from our greater aptness to follow it, and the necessity parents feel themselves under, of guarding and cautioning their children against it, and yet their invariable failure, to a greater or less extent. Another difficulty in this system, and not the least, is, that children evince traces of innate depravity, before example can have had any effect upon them. All the vices that disfigure the man, are distinctly visible, though in embryo in the child. The pride and passion, the perverseness and obstinacy, the envy and malice of manhood, are exemplified in the child, though called forth in the latter, by puny objects, and exercised in childish manners. And what can example have to do with these? Nothing can be plainer, than that these things are a part of their nature; that they are born with them; and that they are a part of that sin in which we are conceived, and of that iniquity wherein we are shaped. The above difficulties, our opponents must solve, before they can make good the ground they assume. And if we resort to the second method, namely, defective education, we shall not find our difficulties at all to decrease. We admit, indeed, the truth of Solomon, when he says, 'Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it.' But in doing it, lies the difficulty; a difficulty which has perplexed and distressed all that ever were parents since the world began. Not that I deny the possibility of its being done on Christian principles. But they who deny our doctrines, are thrown entirely upon their own resources, and they have no right to our means. If they fight not on our side, they have no right to use the weapons from our armory. The moment they do so, they concede their superiority. The instant an appeal is made to the atonement in behalf of their offspring, or prayer is offered to God for them; or the soul stirring motives of the gospel are applied, an acknowledgement is made tacitly at least, of the necessity of a Saviour, and the influence of di-

vine grace in changing the heart and leading them to holiness. The spirit of our opponents says, 'virtuous I myself will make.' If they fail to do it, let them confess it is because of the corruption and depravity of our common nature. And even christian parents, furnished as they are from God with all the arguments of religion, notwithstanding all their prayer, and care, their diligence and fidelity, find it difficult, and often to their sorrow and shame, they fail in it altogether. What then, are we to conclude from this? Certainly, that parents are naturally corrupt in nature, who give defective education, and that children are so, to be led to virtue and holiness with such difficulty. These facts compelled a heathen to admit, that children have the softness of wax to receive vicious impressions, but the hardness of rock to resist virtuous admonitions.' Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child,' and therefore it is, that a 'child LEFT TO HIMSELF, bringeth his mother to shame.' (Prov. xxii. 15. and xxix. 15.) If 'the wicked are estranged from the womb, and go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies,' it is because they are 'conceived in sin,' and 'shapen in iniquity.' (Psa. lviii. 3. and li. 5.)

Finally, it cannot be denied that vice has overspread the world, that men generally have not 'the fear of God before their eyes,' nor his lovely nature in their hearts. They do not spontaneously honor glorify, love, and adore their Maker. That men are not naturally inclined to religion, but that 'the carnal mind is enmity against God,' and men are averse to the restraints and spiritual duties of our most holy faith.' How then can the conclusion be resisted, that we are naturally unholy and depraved. If a certain kind of tree invariably produced bad fruit, whenever, wherever, and however planted, who would deny that the tree was inherently bad? Or if in any family, a certain disease invariably made its appearance in each member, and continued to do so, through all the successive generations, would not every one say, 'it is an hereditary complaint? How then can we deny, with any reason, or any thing like regard to the analogy of speech, that human nature is depraved, and sin is the family complaint of mankind. In short, we have no greater proof that the viper is venomous, and the tiger sanguinary, than that man is wicked. And we might as well deny that bodies have a tendency to gravitate, as that men have by nature a tendency to love the world more than God, and to pursue their present gratifications, rather than their eternal salvation. And the very denial, itself is a proof of the doctrine, that the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint; and that from the sole of the foot even to the head, there is no soundness in it, but wounds and bruises and putrefying sores, which have not been closed, nor bound up, neither mollified with ointment.'

III. *We come now to the third and last division of our discourse, namely, the practical improvement.*

1. We learn from the doctrine of our text, that a state of nature, is a state of sin and alienation from the divine favor. In an unrenewed state, we are continually displeasing God, by evil conduct. Not perhaps by open vice, but by secret rebellion, the rebellion of the heart. Unconverted persons may possess virtuous principles, and amiable qualities, and be respected in society; but their hearts are not right before God. They do not obey the spiritual demands of his law, in 'denying themselves all ungodliness and worldly lust, and living soberly, righteously, and godly in the world.' Religion is not their business: to please and serve God is not their object. Indeed, every unconverted man is opposed to religion, else why not embrace it? He is an enemy of God, else why not love and obey Him? For there is no neutrality, no medium. 'He that is not for me,' says Christ, 'is against me.' 'The carnal mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God neither indeed can be.'

2. We learn from this doctrine, the impossibility of fitting ourselves for the presence and enjoyment of God. We cannot atone for the sins we have committed, nor change our depraved nature, nor turn ourselves into religious men. 'Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? Then may ye also (by your own ability) do good, that are accustomed to do evil.' How indeed is a man to go to work, to fit himself for heaven? He has nothing in him, by nature, of a religious tendency, and how is he of himself to acquire it? Will his heart bring it forth spontaneously? As well might you ask, will the reluctant earth 'yield seed to the sower and bread to the eater,' without being dressed by the skill and labor of the husbandman! But how, I again ask, is a man to make himself religious? He has, by nature, no inclination, nor knowledge, nor power, for anything but sin. 'For that which is born of the flesh, is flesh;' and 'they that are in the flesh, cannot please God,' for 'in our flesh, there dwelleth no good thing:' man undertaking to effect his salvation by his own unassisted efforts, would be in a situation resembling that of a shipwrecked mariner in a desert island, who should undertake to make a life boat for his escape, without having either tools, or materials for its construction.

Finally, we perceive from this view of the subject, the necessity and excellency of the scriptural method of salvation. It ascertains the nature of our case, and it provides and presents an efficacious remedy. Do the scriptures insist upon our fall in Adam? They equally declare our recovery by Christ. Do they declare that the carnal mind is enmity against God? They also declare that 'Christ is our peace.' Do they assert that 'no man cometh unto me except the Father which hath sent me, draw him?' Christ also says, 'If I be lifted up, I will *draw all men* unto me.' Therefore,

all may come, can come, ought to come to him; for he 'lighteneth every man that cometh into the world,' having 'by the grace of God tasted death for every man.' Are we then guilty by actual transgression? 'Him hath God exalted with his right hand, to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance and forgiveness of sins.' Are we depraved in nature, and sinful in heart? Behold the blood of Jesus Christ his son, cleanseth from all sin." Here then we see a remedy which perfectly meets our case. If we can do nothing of ourselves, we 'can do all things through Christ strengthening us.' For it pleased the Father, that in him should all fulness dwell,' and he is made unto us of the Father, wisdom and righteousness, sanctification and redemption.' 'Neither is there any other name given under heaven among men whereby we can be saved,' nor any other method of salvation than by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. He alone can wash away our sins, and the Holy Spirit alone can consecrate our hearts, and testify of our adoption and sanctification. And be not deceived! It is impossible to be saved, unless we undergo this preparation. We are degenerate branches of a degenerate vine, and we must be broken off by repentance, from the old vine, and by faith engrafted into Jesus Christ, the true and living vine. Naturally, we are born of the flesh and are carnal, through grace we must be born of the spirit, and become spiritual. For except a man be born of the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.' Neither can we hope without this divine change to please God, or be fit to enjoy his presence.' 'My brethren, can the fig-tree bear olive berries? either a vine figs? 'Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?" No more can we please God while in the flesh; while unrenewed by the Holy Spirit; for we are 'earthly, sensual, devilish.' And we must therefore be 'washed, sanctified, justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.' Let me then entreat you to seek these blessings. The Holy Spirit is now striving with you; O, yield to his influence, and let him not strive in vain. Ask and you shall receive, seek and you shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you.' And what I say unto one, I say unto all. As God is no respecter of persons,' so there are no exclusives in his plan. It is the glory of the gospel, that the blessing of redemption is commensurate with the curse of sin. If through Adam, all fell, through Christ, all may be restored. Through his atonement 'a manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal,' and 'whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.'

In conclusion, let no man charge his loss of final happiness upon his God. That benevolent and glorious Being who declares upon his own existence that he has 'no pleasure in the death of the wicked,' has eternally closed the mouth of the gainsayer by having 'so

loved the world as to give his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.' Thus hath he revealed 'life and immortality;' thus hath he opened the way for our escape from sin and its consequences, and our entrance into the regions of endless bliss. If therefore men are lost eventually, it will not be on the ground of our natural depravity; for this may be washed away by the blood of Christ. Nor on the ground of our actual transgressions, however numerous and aggravated, for all these shall be pardoned to him that believes in the Lord Jesus Christ. But he that is finally condemned, will be so for his voluntary and obstinate rejection of that salvation which Christ died to purchase for him, and which he is called by the gospel and by the Spirit of God to seek and to enjoy. 'For this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil.'

POETRY.

PRAYER AT THE COMMENCEMENT OF A PROTRACTED MEETING.

BY MRS. H. M. DODGE.

Lord, we are waiting now. Is there not seen
A little spot upon the distant sky,
A small, light, floating cloud? Oh, let it be
The herald of a mighty shower, the pledge
Of fruits and ripened harvest; let it be
The blessed harbinger that thou art near
With the rich droppings of thy saving love.

Thou hast been passing, Lord! Thy chariot wheels
Have left a glory in their path of light,
Yet thou didst pass along! There was a band
Of ministering spirits with thee, and their hymns
Were full of heavenly love, of grace, free grace,
Through thy redeeming righteousness to man;
Yet thou didst pass along! Oh, *now descend*
And pass us not again till we are blest—
Powerfully, richly blest. Let us but *touch*
hy gracious garment, and our souls shall live.
Yet, let thy voice be *mighty* in our midst,
And pass us not again till thou hast laid
Thy conquering hand of love upon thy foes,
And made them all submit! Oh, shed abroad
The wonders of thy grace in every heart,
And let Bethesda's pool be open'd here
To heal diseases of the soul. Oh come,
In all thy majesty, in all thy power;
Destroy the mighty holds of sin and death,
The tempter's fortresses, and let us breathe
The pure air of thy kingdom, pure and free
As the redeemed in paradise. Oh come,
Thou star of Bethlehem, thou Sun of peace,
Thou Glory of the highest heaven of heavens,
Come now and bless our souls; behold we wait
In solemn, trembling readiness; behold
Our eyes are turned from vanity and sin:
In waiting for thy presence, let it come;
Thy saints are weeping here; they mourn, Oh Lord,
And long for thy approach: here they have knelt
Around a covenant altar, and have made
A solemn, awful promise not to cease
Their agonies and pleadings at thy feet,
Till thou dost come and bless: then, Oh descend,
And disappoint them not. Lo! here is found
The trembling sinner, too,—the frighten'd soul
That sees its awful guilt, and now would hide
Beneath thy shielding righteousness. Oh come
Dear, mighty Saviour, come. What can we do
If thou withhold thy presence? Come and bless!

SERMON VIII.

ON SUBMISSION TO GOD.

BY REV. LABAN CLARK.
OF THE NEW YORK CONFERENCE.

Submit yourselves therefore to God. James iv. 7.

We are commanded when we pray not to use vain repetitions. Whether the words we use are vain, that is, unmeaning; or whether proper words are vainly repeated, will make but little difference in the case; either will be inconsistent with rational devotion. But if our public devotions should be performed in plain and explicit language, we ought most certainly to avoid all ambiguous and unmeaning terms in our public teaching; because the design of teaching or exhortation, is to instruct the mind as well as to persuade the heart. Nor is it sufficient that we use proper words, or even scripture phrases; but that we use them properly, and with a design at least, to be expressly understood; that our hearers may be fed with the sincere milk of the word.

I will not say that the words of our text have been used without any meaning; but I do fear that they have been frequently used in exhortation and other religious discourse, without *conveying* any distinct ideas of duty or obligation.

The exhortation '*Submit yourselves therefore to God*' necessarily involves two important points of doctrine.

I. The Moral Agency of Man.
II. The Moral Government of God.

By the moral agency of man, we understand something more than the simple fact that he is a sentient and rational being, possessing physical and intellectual powers. We mean that he is capable of perceiving moral duties of right and wrong, of virtue and vice; that he is not only conscious of moral perceptions, but he can think, reason, decide and act according to his sense of moral duty.

To constitute a moral agent, two things are necessary; that is

power and *liberty*. The power must be adequate and proper in its kind, for it will not follow, that because he has power to walk, therefore he can fly; no more will it follow, because man has power to think and reason, that he has power to decide and act; or in other words, man's having intellectual or physical power to perform an action, without the moral qualities required in the performance, does not constitute him a moral agent, nor the action itself a moral action.

It is not necessary at present to inquire how he obtains this power, but to show that without moral power, he cannot be a moral agent. And of this, our plain perceptions and practical feelings, are the best proof that can be given. For without this moral power there could be no consciousness of obligation, nor guilt for the neglect of duty. We might as well exhort the beasts that perish to submit to God, as to exhort man if he is not a moral agent, or if he does not possess moral power to obey.

In connection with this moral power, we must keep in view, that the object to which it is directed, must be within its reach, and circumstanced to the capacity of the agent. For it will not follow that if man is a moral agent, he is able to perform the highest duty of angels, or even that fallen man is capable of making honorable the perfect, but violated law of God. This none could do but the *Son of God* himself.

Although it is not necessary to a moral agent, that he should be in a probationary state, where the incentives to evil are many, and the performance of good difficult, yet, it certainly is not inconsistent with moral agency; and this is the very circumstance in which we must contemplate man in his present state of being.

Liberty is as essential to moral agency as power. As power in an agent is useless, unless the object on which that power is to act be placed within the reach and circumstances of the agent; so power, without liberty to act, would be unavailing. By liberty, however, we do not mean the bare permission to do or not to do, but that self controlling energy by which we will, or not will. Of this liberty we feel the most perfect consciousness in all our decisions. Nor is this sense of liberty fallacious or deceptive, but must be relied upon with the same certainty, that we do upon all our other perceptions and feelings. The schoolmen have fallen into great contention, and almost endless subtleties, on the subject of man's *willing;* and they have darkened council by words without knowledge. Many systems both of philosophy and divinity have taken their rise in the mists of these metaphysical speculations, and their advocates have arranged themselves either on the side of *free will*, or necessity; but they have all agreed in one thing, which may be considered the cause of all their perplexity and error. The phrase-

ology generally used, has been incorrect and perplexing; for on both sides they have talked of the *freedom of the will* and all their arguments for and against liberty, have been predicated of the *will*. Whereas it is the mind that is free to will, as it is free in all its other operations, and to will is only an operation of the mind. Therefore, liberty is predicated of the mind and not of the will; and to talk of the *liberty of the will*, is as senseless as it is to talk of the *will of the will*. And even the term *free will* is unphilosophical unless it is taken in a restricted and accommodated sense, when we wish to distinguish between actions performed from motives entirely within ourselves, and those performed under a foreign influence, powerfully persuading us to the choice; but even here, the influence must only be persuasive, for if it be compulsory, the action can be no longer of choice, but of necessity.

The distinctions that are frequently made between natural liberty and moral liberty, are mere evasions and not arguments. For if natural liberty is necessary to enable us to perform natural actions; certainly moral liberty is requisite to render us morally accountable; and moral agency is always used in reference to moral actions and moral accountability.

The liberty for which we plead is therefore predicated of the mind which is wisely constituted by our Maker to perceive, think, reason, and decide, on subjects suited to its limits, whether natural or moral.

The exhortation, submit yourselves to God, calls emphatically for a decision of mind on a moral subject clearly perceived, and implies both power and liberty to obey.

The most plausible objections to moral agency have been drawn from the fallen nature of man, although we most firmly believe and constantly teach the doctrine of the fall, and the consequent corruption of the human heart, that it is wholly set to do evil, and that man is inclined to evil only, without any mixture of good; continually, without any intermission of evil: Yet, we believe the moral agency of man, with the liberty for which we have contended, can be, not only reconciled with our views of human depravity, but the objection itself can be proved fallacious, and the argument sophistical.

The objection may be stated thus. The corruption of man's nature since the fall, is such that he is morally incapable of performing a holy act; or, as it is sometimes expressed, man's *will* is so *perverse*, that he cannot choose good. The last statement supposes the will to be something distinct from the rest of the man, and that *choice* is an effect of the *will*, and the whole force of the objection rests upon the unphilosophical notion that the will determines our choice; whereas we have shown that it is the mind that determines,

and is voluntary as well as active in all its operations. The first form of the objection is more plausible, but is founded upon the same fallacy; for an involuntary action certainly cannot be holy or unholy, and the moral inability, if it mean anything, must mean the want of a *will;* but certainly fallen man has a mind, and a mind that is conscious of liberty and active power, with respect to moral, as well as natural objects.

But the fallacy of the whole objection will appear, by showing that it offends against matter of fact. The spirit of the objection is, that man cannot will contrary to his moral nature, that an unholy man cannot will that which is holy, and of course it must follow that a holy man cannot will that which is unholy; and who does not see that this would render a state of probation in either case nugatory; the holy cannot lose his holiness, nor the unholy forsake his wickedness. If it be said that man is capable of being changed by a power independent of himself, and therefore a probation is granted, with a view to this change being effected, the probation then can only respect the power that produces the change, and not the man who is only a passive object of another power. But that man can will contrary to his moral nature, is proved by matter of fact. God created man after his own image—made him upright, and therefore his moral nature was holy; but Adam fell: His transgression was either voluntary or not. If not voluntary, then he should be pitied, not blamed. But if voluntary, then he willed to sin, and his willing could not have proceeded from an unholy nature; for his unholy nature was the consequence of his fall, not the cause of it. Adam whose moral nature was holy and morally free, willed that which was unholy, or as is well expressed by the Westminster Divines, 'man being left to the freedom of his own will, did thereby sin, and fell from the state in which God created him.'

The fact in the case is not altered by alledging that Adam was tempted to evil by an unholy being, distinct from, and existing independent of himself. For the temptation could only be persuasive and such as he had power to resist, or otherwise he would not be blamed, and his act would have been without choice, and his transgression, if such it would be called, a matter of mere necessity.

We readily admit that a moral agent may be susceptible of the persuasive influence of motives, and we think it will be difficult to conceive, how an intelligent being can act without motive. But it is the part of an intelligent being, possessing moral liberty, to reason and decide in the midst of the endless variety of motives, which are addressed to him, whether they are from without or within himself, agreeable, or contrary, to his moral nature.

Now this being the case, it is easy to prove that man, with all his natural corruptions, and with an unholy nature, may yet choose

that which is good, or may will to perform a holy action. For if Adam with a holy nature willed to sin, fallen man with an unholy nature can will to obey. Adam was in a state of probation under the holy law of his Creator, suited to his nature and capacity: Fallen man is now in a state of probation under the mild and merciful law of his Redeemer, with a dispensation of grace suited to his fallen nature. Adam was under the persuasive motives of temptation from the devil; but fallen man is under the persuasive motives and redeeming influence of Jesus Christ his Saviour; with all the demonstrations of love and tender compassion. Besides, the Holy Spirit is given to reprove, instruct, draw, and even excite, by working in him both to *will* and to do. Adam had good and evil set before him, and how faithfully and affectionately are life and death set before the fallen sinner, and how many both alarming and persuasive motives are addressed to him, entreating him to turn from his evil way that he may live. In short, I think we are driven to this only alternative, either fallen man under a dispensation of grace can will to come to Christ and live, or that Adam necessarily willed to sin. Some metaphysical divines of late seem to have felt the force of this argument, and have endeavored to shift the ground, by asserting that man has no moral principle in his nature, independent of his own volitions, that neither Adam in paradise possessed any moral principle, before he chose sin,* nor that his offspring have any moral principle of holiness or unholiness, until they will to sin. And what is most unaccountable in this new system of divinity is, that they maintain as their view of depravity that the *nature* of man is such that in all the appropriate circumstances of his being he *will sin* and *only* sin.

It might be sufficient to show the absurdity of this theory, simply to inquire what kind of a nature man must possess, that is neither holy nor unholy, and yet will sin, and only sin; or how it is that he sins by nature, while his nature is not sinful. But the worst of this theory is, that it represents the Divine Being as creating an intelligent creature, leaving it to his own volition, whether his nature be good or bad: or even whether he would have a moral nature or not.

* It is possible that it may be denied that the system to which we have referred, excludes moral principle from the nature of Adam, until he chose sin; because he probably exercised his voluntary powers in the choice of holiness before he chose sin. But this would not remove the argument from the former position, that man cannot will contrary to his moral nature. For if he possessed a principle of holiness, in his moral nature, before he sinned, he must have willed contrary to his moral nature, when he chose sin.

If it should be said that moral principle depends on choice, then it follows that God cannot make holy intelligent beings, without their choice. But President Edwards maintained that there could be moral principles, independent of volition. i. e. prior to mans' willing. *Edwards on original Sin.*

But a creature without a moral nature would be very different from what the scriptures everywhere represent man to be; therefore God could not make *man* without the consent or act of the human will, which of course according to this theory, man must have, prior to his being created. The scriptures declare that God created man after his own image, and this image is said to be righteousness and true holiness; and it is too great an absurdity to say that God created man after his natural or physical image. It is also said that God made man upright, and he hath sought out many inventions; and it would be worse than absurd to say that this means no more than that God made man erect. That the only characteristic difference between him and other animals, is that he was made to walk on two feet.

We rest the whole weight of our argument in favor of the moral agency of man, on the fact that every man is conscious that he possesses a moral sense, with moral power and liberty: and with this plain, practical feeling of our nature, the holy scriptures literally agree, and all the precepts, promises, and threatenings, contained in the word of God, are addressed to our consciousness of moral obligation. Let this doctrine be set aside, and we must abandon all religion and even morality itself, as having no real existence in the world: and resolve everything into mere fantasm, and acknowledge with Hume that the world exists only in idea and ourselves ideal beings. This leads us to notice,

II. *The doctrine of God's moral government.* By moral government, we mean that kind of government which is suited to the nature of intelligent moral beings, and consists in laws and rules respecting their conduct, tempers and affections, to God and their fellow beings: and which can be addressed both to the understanding, and the heart. This is distinguished from the natural government which God exercises over the material world. We do not suppose that the Apostle was exhorting men to submit themselves to the creative and conservative acts of divine power: for it would be as idle as it would be to exhort worlds to be, rivers to run, the stars to keep their course, or the sun to shine by day. Creation and preservation are acts of infinite power, which are put forth according to his own will; but moral government is exercised over intelligent moral beings, and is founded on principles of right and the fitness of things, and calculated to display the moral perfections of the divine being, and promote the happiness of his rational creatures. Whatever there may be of sovereign right in God to be the moral governor of the universe, the government itself is entirely different from the mere display of arbitrary and sovereign power; the exhortation, 'submit yourselves therefore to God,' is a moral requirement, and is founded on other principles than sovereignty.

So far as God's sovereignty is concerned, there is no resistance; but the moral duty required in submission, is what may be neglected, and even resisted: therefore we are exhorted to submit ourselves to God, and to his moral government; to be his obedient and loving people; to walk in all his holy ways, and to serve and honor him in heart and life.

That system which presents God only as a sovereign Being, casts a veil over his moral perfections, and all exhortations to submit to God's sovereignty, are calculated to terrify and confound without instructing the understanding or persuading the heart.

But how often are we exhorted to submit to the sovereign disposal of a sovereign God? What moral instruction can this convey especially when we are told that this sovereign disposal is founded on an eternal purpose, which includes not only our final destinies, but all our actions and even our volitions? And what moral effect can such exhortations produce, except a sullen, though submissive despair? Unfortunately this effect has been too often visible,—whereas the doctrine of submission to God's moral government addresses itself to our understanding, and moral feelings, and can be urged by the consideration of rewards and penalties,—presenting the most powerful motives to obedience, drawn from the moral perfections of God, and the present and eternal happiness of the creature.

The doctrine of submission to God is not enforced in our text purely in reference to law, whether primeval, Mosaical, or moral. For this would not be suited to the present condition of man, but it respects the moral government which includes the grand scheme of redemption by Jesus Christ, and the economy of Grace and Mercy by which a sinner may draw near to God; for the Apostle adds, 'Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you; cleanse your hands ye sinners and purify your hearts ye double minded.' From which we learn the exhortation is addressed to sinners, and in view of their reformation and salvation, the law of God is eternally the same, and can neither relax its claims, nor remit its penalties; and when once violated can never be satisfied by any future obedience from the creature that violated it. The only satisfaction that can be made for the violation of law, is found in the voluntary sacrifice of the Son of God, and the atoning merits of his death, 'who suffered for our sins, the just for the unjust that he might bring us to God.' To require submission of a sinner to the pure and holy law of God without any view to the evangelical terms of mercy, is only requiring him to submit to the penalty of the law. For as a sinner, he stands guilty before God, a violator of his law, and exposed to all its curses; and to submit, is only to yield himself up to his merited punishment. Should he so far submit, as to acknowledge that the law is holy, just and good, by that acknowledgement he only sees

more clearly that sin is exceeding sinful. The exhortation to submit yourselves therefore to God, is in view of pardoning mercy, offered to the guilty. But God never made the law a condition of pardon, he no more requires obedience to the moral, than he does to the Mosaic or Adamic law, as the terms of justification of a sinner. For that would be justification by works, and not by grace;—but we are justified and saved by grace through faith, and that not of ourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast. We are exhorted to submit to God in Christ, and the act of submission is to receive Christ by faith, and to receive him in all his offices:—our all-atoning Saviour, our gracious and merciful Governor, and our final Judge.

While submission on our part is a voluntary act, it is an act in view of obtaining mercy; and the terms are dictated by infinite grace, and suited to the condition of our wretchedness. Repentance towards God was never required of unoffending and innocent beings —nor yet of those beyond the reach of mercy; of the former, it would be unnecessary; and to the latter, it would be unavailing. Therefore, repentance is granted to fallen man, as an indication of mercy—and it is perfectly suitable, that we should come to Christ with penitent and contrite hearts. So also, faith in Christ is a term or condition of our justification, and God by sovereign right, as well as in infinite grace, has made it the only condition of pardon and eternal life. 'He that believeth on the Son of God hath everlasting life, he that believeth not, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.' Repentance and faith are gospel requirements, and are enjoined in view of man's salvation, adapted to the circumstance of his fallen and guilty condition, and accompanied with the promise of the remission of sins that are past. To submit, is therefore, to receive Christ and his salvation on the terms he has set forth in his gospel, and be saved in the way he has provided for us.

Submission, is not only to believe in Christ, but to do it with the heart unto righteousness. For if we would obtain eternal life, we must deny ourselves, take up our cross and follow him. He is the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him. Christ hath procured our pardon by his sacrificial death—it is offered to us on terms of grace suited to our weakness and misery,—is brought nigh to us by all the persuasiveness of the love of Christ and the direct influences of the Holy Spirit. And if we are not saved it is because we receive not the love of the truth that we might be saved; or, in other words, because we *will not* submit ourselves to God.

SERMON IX.

ON CHRISTIAN PERFECTION.

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Let us go on unto perfection. HEBREWS vi. 1.

NOT merely towards, but *unto* perfection: or in other words, let us be brought *to this* perfection. Let us, by faith, cast ourselves on the merit, on the promise, and into the arms of Jesus; and by him, be brought to perfection: with this view, we shall see it possible and easy to him that believeth. The doctrine of this text, though much opposed, presents a state of grace, the experience of which, is essential to eternal salvation; on whatsoever we rest our hope of heaven, one thing is certain, 'that without holiness, no man shall see the Lord.' The doctrine of Christian perfection needs but to be understood, to command the assent of every faithful believer. We shall then,

I. EXPLAIN, II. ENFORCE IT.

I. *It is not Absolute Perfection* that belongs only to God. It is not Adamic perfection, for in his primeval state, redemption could have no relation to man, but Christian perfection is a work of redemption. *The design of Christ in dying* was to 'redeem us from *all* iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works.' Nor angelic perfection, for angels were not redeemed. It is not perfect knowledge: created beings are none of them perfect in knowledge. Nor is it a perfection which admits of no increase: for we believe our love will, even in heaven, always increase. Nor is it a state from which we cannot fall; for while we are on probation, we are capable of sinning or of obeying. Nor is it a state of freedom from temptation: for Christ was tempted—yet without sin; and we must fight the good fight of faith, to lay hold on eternal life. Nor is it a deliverance from human infirmity; for in these St. Paul said 'I will most gladly glory;' and he could not glory in sin.

Nor is it freedom from the cross, and cross-bearing; for Paul said, 'God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, who saith, whosoever doth not bear his cross, he cannot be my disciple.' It doth not deliver us from a continual need of, and dependence on Christ; for as the branch is dependent on the vine, so is the holy man dependent on Christ for continual grace to live holy, for 'separate from him we can do nothing.' Thus for the want of understanding these negatives, many have said there is no Christian perfection on earth. We will now show what it is:

1. *It is perfect faith*, relying wholly on Christ: excluding unbelief relating to his merit, his love, his promise and his power: he has merited it by his death, he wills it to us by his love, he has promised it in his word, and his power effects this great work in our hearts. 2. It is perfect love, excluding all enmity to God. 'Whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee.' Such is the language of one enjoying perfect love. 3. It is perfect humility: excluding all pride: he says with St. Paul, 'To me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given.' And with the poet,

> 'As less than nothing in thy sight,
> And feel that Christ is all in all.'

None have so deep a sense of their insufficiency and helplessness as those who have that perfect love which casteth out all slavish, all tormenting fear. 4. It is perfect meekness, excluding all anger: 'Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you,' is a scripture that is exemplified in them—loving their neighbor as themselves, they cannot hate any, but always try to 'overcome evil with good.' Hence, 5, It is perfect benevolence, excluding all envy. They envy not the happier state of another, although his riches, honor, ease, gifts, usefulness or popularity surpass their own: they rejoice in the well-being, success or usefulness of another, even though it seem to obscure their own usefulness and acceptableness, or success in the sight of men. If envy be an enjoyment to others, they envy not even such. 6. It is perfect patience, excluding all fretfulness; they bear and forbear, when they are tried by all the nameless provocations incident to human life; and 'in their patience possess they their souls.' It is in fact an exclusion of all inbred corruption, and the pure LOVE OF GOD filling the heart. To this state of grace the Holy Spirit bears witness in the sanctified soul: witnessing that all inbred sin is destroyed from his heart. Shining on the heart with more or less brightness, according to the strength of faith with which Jesus is held. This witness assures him that God has sanctified him wholly; love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, fidelity, meekness and temperance, Gal. v. 22., are its immediate fruits. Anoth-

er mode in scripture of expressing its fruits, is in I. Thess. v. 16. &c. 'Rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing; In every thing give thanks.' He fulfils the law of love, 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, with all thy soul, with all thy mind, and with all thy strength.' He is an heir of this benediction and promise, 'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.' St. Paul's prayer is answered on him, 'The very God of peace sanctify you wholly.'—and the annexed promise fulfiled, 'Faithful is he that calleth you who also will do it.' He now feels that, 'the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin;' and, 'herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment, because as he is, so are we in *this world;* and can say, 'We have the mind of Christ.' What Jesus said, John xv. 3: 'Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you,' is true of such a person. He can truly say, 'I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, and the life that I live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God;' and he has an understanding of this text, Rom. vi. 22: 'But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life;' for 'he that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself even as he is pure.' This is the perfect and upright man, one that feareth God and escheweth evil. Will an objector say, 'Can any (such) good thing come out of (Jesus of) Nazareth?' The answer is 'Come and see' if this is not your privilege in the merit of Him who will, 'through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will; working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ.' Now let me entreat the Christian to lift his heart in praying faith, while I shall

II. ENFORCE THE TRUTH OF THIS DOCTRINE.

1. By the command of God. 'Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul and with all thy strength.' Are his commands to be slighted, or obeyed? Will he command and not give grace to perform? Impossible! Say not it is more than I can do; that would impeach his goodness, justice and truth. Say rather with St. Paul, 'I *can* do all things, through Christ which strengtheneth me.' His grace abounds, he will enable you to obey: prayer claims the needful aid; use it perseveringly, and you shall succeed. 'All things are possible to him that believeth.'

2d. He promises it: 'Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean; from all your filthiness, and from all your idols will I cleanse you—*I will cause* you to walk in my statutes, and keep my judgements and do them.' 'Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it. How shall he not with him, also, freely give us all things.' Holiness is his gift.

3d. He wills it: 'This is the will of God, even your sanctification.' And his will that you should be holy, is the unavoidable consequence of his hatred to impurity; otherwise, sin would be no sin; and can he *will* what is impossible, and not for the best; or will that you should be what he will not make you? how palpably absurd! He certainly *will* give thee grace, and then glory.

4th. Your holiness was designed in the Saviour's death: 'He gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from *all* iniquity, and purify to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.' Does he not promise you heaven? He cannot fulfill that promise, unless he make you holy here, which is the essential qualification for heaven. Doubt not therefore his promise, his truth, his power, the sincerity of his will, and you shall be holy here; and why not even NOW: the sooner his will is performed in you and by you, the more abundantly shines the triumph of grace.

5th. Consider the danger of treating this high gospel privilege with indifference: can we be indifferent to a divine command, and be guiltless? Whence the numerous herd of backsliders, but from neglecting to follow after holiness? whereas, if all believers were to pursue after this attainment, and persevere therein, where should we find a backslider? O the misery of our resting in present attainments! and that while on a race for eternal life.

6th. Shall Jesus die for us, and purchase not only our pardon, but our holiness and heaven, and hold out to us all the gospel blessings, and urge us now to receive holiness as essential to eternal life, and we be content to respect those inestimable blessings only with a *cold doctrinal assent*; or make but feeble effort to possess them? While his kingdom suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force. O what a proof this of our need of holiness! what an argument to awaken us to the pursuit of it! But, perhaps our greatest impediment is, our want of a clear understanding of it: sanctification is simply a cleansing from all unholy dispositions; this is its real meaning: our being filled with love, is a consequence of the destruction of this inbred sin: and then that love may increase through the remainder of life, yea, and that eternally. This cleansing by the blood of Christ, is our privilege, at any time subsequent to regeneration; which regeneration, generally accomplishes in our hearts, more destruction of the carnal mind, than remains to be done to complete the work of sanctification; and the sooner we come to Jesus to perfect this work of cleansing, the sooner it will be done. What then is to be done? Look steadfastly by faith and prayer to our crucified Lord for it. Expect it now, you will receive it by simple faith. It is Christ's own work; believe his promise, and that it is yours NOW, and the work shall be done. Say not I am unworthy, and therefore may not now have it, for your worthiness or unworthiness enters not

into the question; Christ is worthy, and that is enough; it is his work, and he will do it. Say not, I must be so or so convicted of inbred sin, before I can be sanctified; that conviction is *his work*, and he will give you so much as he sees necessary to the work that is to be done; to believe is your work; believe now, and Christ will now accomplish his own work in your soul; do not prescribe *how* he should do his work, hold on to his *command*, his *promise*, his *will*, and his *sacrifice*; dismiss that soul-destroying sin of unbelief, and with the wrestling patriarch say, 'I will not let thee go, unless thou bless me.' Let your whole heart enter the contest; hear no reasonings of unbelief; seize on the reasoning of faith; say God *can* and *will* do it; I *will* and CAN receive it even NOW, 'now is the accepted time, Behold *now* is the day of this salvation.'

Lastly: keep in mind that what is your privilege by faith, is a present privilege; and that what comes by faith, is a free gift; if eternal life is the gift of God, as St. Paul saith, then surely all the gifts that qualify you for that life, must of course be free, and if free for one, consequently free for all; for God is no respecter of persons; be then a persevering beggar on that free bounty of him, who, by his infinitely meritorious death, hath purchased all for all, who come unto God through him; and you shall prove, by happy experience, that he will not send you empty away.

Finally, let me say, 'Life is but a vapor,—that soon vanisheth:' would you improve time for heaven, rest not another hour, short of it. Would you avoid backsliding, 'be ye holy, for I (saith God) am holy.' Would you have victory over the world the flesh and the devil, let 'the blood of Christ, who through the eternal spirit, offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God. Do you feel an impure heart, 'Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, PERFECTING HOLINESS IN THE FEAR OF GOD.

THE CHRISTIAN'S REFUGE.

"My refuge is in God." Psalms xlii.—7.

Man is subject to innumerable evils.—Embarked on a tempestuous ocean, he is driven by every wind and tossed by every wave. The disappointments of to-day bedew his cheeks with tears and swell his heart with grief. Disappointment and sorrow, pain, sickness and death are his common lot. In this world of troubles he needs a refuge. In what shall he seek it? Shall he seek it in riches, in honor, in an arm of flesh? Riches will make to 'themselves wings and fly away.' The laurels that deck the brow of honor will fade; and that brow will become food for worms. There is no refuge in an arm of flesh, it is so weak, so frail, so changeable.

The Psalmist sought not his refuge in man. He knew that all human power was impotence—that wealth and splendor could shed no ray of light upon the darkness of the soul—that no ties of friendship could save him from the grave. He sought a refuge that could shelter him in the hour of adversity—that could not be shaken by the changes of time, nor dissipated by the flames of the last day. He looked to the throne of the Eternal, and exclaimed with confidence, '*My refuge is in God. He* is my defence, my strong tower, the rock of my salvation.'

In God must we seek *our* refuge, if we would have any shelter from the storms of life, or from the eternal tempest. We shall find God a *certain* refuge. We may trust in man, and be disappointed. We may form friendships which are ardent and strong in prosperity, but they may not abide in the day of trial. Friends and neighbors may desert us in the midst of misfortune and distress, and none be left to relieve or to cheer. We may place our dependence on relations, and at the very time we need them most they may be taken from us. The parent may fondly hope that his beloved child will be the stay and the staff of his declining years; but the blooming cheek may wither, the youthful pulse may cease to bound, and the parent's hope be buried in the tomb. But God is unchangeable. None who put their trust in him will ever be disappointed. He *will* be 'a present help in every time of trouble. The name of the Lord is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is *safe*.' Let us only be enabled to say with the Psalmist, '*My refuge*

is in God;' and we may look with composure upon all the trials and troubles of life. If friends forsake us, we have 'a Friend that sticketh closer than a brother.' If afflicted with disease or burdened with sin, we may go to him for relief. If fortune frown upon us, and the world cast out our name as evil, we still have the smiles of Heaven, and know that our names are written in the book of life. If our portion of this world's goods be small and scanty, we are heirs to 'an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away.' Under all circumstances in life, we have a sure, an everlasting refuge. In the deepest affliction, in the most excruciating pain, in contending with the last enemy, 'we have *strong consolation*, who have fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before us.'

God is an *all-sufficient* refuge. Friends may pity, but they cannot always relieve. They may shed the tear of sympathy as they see us mourning for our sins; but they cannot heal the wounded conscience. They may be kind to us in our distress—may gather around our dying pillow; but they cannot rebuke our disease—cannot detain the departing spirit. But God is able to deliver us out of all our troubles. He can save us from the malice of our enemies, from the wiles of the wicked one—can ease our troubled mind, speak peace to the guilty soul, direct us through our earthly pilgrimage, and pour the light of Heaven upon us, as we pass 'the valley of the shadow of death.' He is perfectly acquainted with all our wants, with all our sufferings, and his grace will at all times be sufficient for us. In danger and in darkness we need 'fear no evil, for He is with us;' we shall be safe 'under the shadow of His wings.' He has all power in Heaven and on earth; 'there is none that can deliver out of His hand.' The conspiring efforts of wicked men and fallen angels cannot injure us, while our *refuge is in God*. Surely he is an all-sufficient refuge.

He is also an *eternal* refuge. Our friends and relatives may be numerous; their kindness to us may be great; but they all 'dwell in houses of clay, whose foundation is the dust, which are crushed beneath the moth.' Their kindness is limited to the present life. They cannot accompany us to the world of spirits, nor tell what shall be our portion there. But if our *refuge is in God*, 'when flesh and heart fail us, he will be the strength of our heart, and our portion for ever.' His arm, which has been our strength in life, will be our support in death, and will guide us to his kingdom. His voice will one day awake our sleeping dust, and his presence will be our refuge and our delight for ever.

CHRISTIANS, this *certain*, this *all-sufficient*, this *eternal refuge*, is yours. It is not provided exclusively for angels and the higher order of beings. It is provided for him that believeth in Jesus.

Flee to this refuge, and you shall receive consolation in all your troubles. Remain in this refuge, and you shall suffer no more in time than will be for your best good: and in eternity, all suffering and sorrow will be at an end. Remain in this refuge, and when the 'heavens shall pass away and the elements melt with fervent heat,' you shall awake in the image of holiness, and, as you wing your way to the courts above, shall unite in the triumphant song, 'O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?'

Impenitent Sinners, you have no refuge! No refuge from the dreadful evils which await you in this life—no refuge from the storm and tempest of divine wrath! You are 'without God and without hope;' in the midst of danger the most imminent—the most alarming. Oh! flee to this ark of safety, while it is yet open to receive you. Hasten to this city of refuge—this covert from the tempest. Time flies while you linger. Soon, very soon, it will be too late. 'Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.'

SERMON X.

DIVINE PREDESTINATION, OR THE SUFFERINGS AND GLORY OF THE SAINTS.

BY REV. WILLIAM JEWETT.
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For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.
'Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified. and whom he justified, them he also glorified.' ROMANS, viii. 29, 30.

IT is very important to us, that we have a correct knowledge of the Holy Scriptures. There are many things to prevent our coming at truth, and especially *the truth* as it is in Jesus. Men are prone to read the Scriptures with an eye to some particular creed, by which means, they very often make them speak a language they were never designed to speak; as, for instance, the words of our text, have, time and again, been brought forward to prove, 'that God before the foundation of the world, elected a certain number of men and angels to eternal life; and foreordained the rest to everlasting death, and the number is so certain and definite, that it cannot be either increased or diminished.' It seems to be taken for granted, that because the term 'predestinate' is used by the Apostle in the text, it applies to the above mentioned doctrine. And to make this (they say) the more certain, the Apostle uses the phrase, 'As many as he foreknew, he did predestinate.' Now it appears, that the Apostle did not say, '*as many* as he foreknew,' but, 'For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate;' the two phrases may convey very different ideas, and will, when properly considered, afford no proof of that doctrine. But, it is still urged, that as many as he (God) specially called, he justified fully, and glorified eternally, and therefore all men will be saved. Here then we have (as others affirm) a legitimate child of the just named doctrine, the doctrine of Universal Salvation, and this, the text is supposed to support. Now, in regard to either of the above-named doctrines, we think they have no foundation in the text, even admitting they were true, but even here we hesitate, and are ready to say, as yet we see no reason to believe them, however we will not stop now to assign our reasons.

There are others, (who feel disposed to embrace the truth,) which say God having a perfect knowledge of all men, and their need of a Saviour, determined that as they had very far gone from original righteousness and of their own nature inclined to evil and that continually, they must now be made conformable to the image of Christ, in order that they may be saved. God calls all men to come to Christ; all such as come in obedience to his call, he justifies, he pardons their sins, and accepts them in Jesus.

All such as are pardoned, if faithful to the end, are glorified or finally saved. In view of the doctrine embraced in this explanation of the text we can heartily say amen, but in reference to the text under consideration, we do not think the Apostle had this in view when he expressed himself in the language of our text. We believe his object was to encourage his brethren in the midst of their afflictions, inasmuch, as God designed after they had suffered awhile to take them up to glory. In our remarks upon this scripture, we shall inquire.

I. WHAT ARE WE TO UNDERSTAND BY THE ACT HERE ASCRIBED TO GOD?

'*He also did predestinate.*' It may be well for us to remark here, that the term *predestination* does not occur, even *once* in all the Bible; the term *predestinated* only twice, (see Eph. 1. 5. 11.) and predestinate twice, as in the text. Parkhurst in his Lexicon on the Greek word Proorizo, says, pro, before, orizo, to determine; hence he gives this definition, to determine or define beforehand, or before the event; the pointing and marking beforehand the boundaries, &c.; again, on the orizo from oros, a bound, limit, to bound, to limit, hence a boundary, a line of demarkation, a line to direct the course of the Saint; therefore the Saint need not be at a loss to know what to do or how to act, for God hath marked the course; learn it and be glad. Dr. A. Clarke has given us the meaning of the verb, which he says signifies, 'define, finish, bound or terminate. Whence oros, a boundary, or limit, signifies to define beforehand, and circumscribe by certain bounds or limits.' Admitting the above definition to be correct, we shall understand, by the phrase, 'predestination of God,' the lines drawn, or boundaries fixed by God in reference to his people.

II. WHO ARE THOSE, WHOM HE HATH PREDESTINATED?

The text will answer this, at once. '*For whom he did foreknow he also did predestinate.*' That we may understand the apostle, let us inquire, what is the meaning of the term 'foreknow.' Foreknow is compounded of fore and know, therefore, it signifies to know beforehand. If we can fix on the meaning of the word *know*, we shall soon arrive at the truth of this subject. And, first, the term know, signifies, to perceive with certainty, as in the case of Boaz

and Ruth, (see Ruth 3. 11.) 'For all the city of my people doth know (perceive) that thou art a virtuous woman.' Our Lord in speaking to his disciples of the false prophets said (Math. vii. 11.) 'Ye shall know them by their fruits.' That is, ye shall by their fruits perceive their real character, and not be deceived by their false pretensions to piety or zeal.

Secondly. It signifies to see with approbation. In this sense it is used in various places in the Holy Scriptures. 'I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine.' (see John x. 14.) 'As the Father knoweth me even so know I the Father,' verse 15. We think that the Lord Jesus, meant to be understood as saying, I approve of my Father's design in the plan of salvation, and my Father approves of me, in that 'I lay down my life for the sheep.' Again, the great Apostle to the Gentiles saith, 'But I will come to you shortly, if the Lord will, and will know not the speech of them which are puffed up, but the power.' Cor. iv. 19. That the Apostle knew, agreeably to the first meaning of the term know, (viz. to perceive with certainty) the speech of them which were puffed up is evident, but that he did *not know* them agreeably to the second definition, that is, approve of them, is as evident. He would know, that is, approve of that Gospel which possessed power, and which would prove the power of God to salvation to every one that believeth, Jew or Gentile.

'And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labor among you, and are over you, in the Lord, and admonish you.' 1 Thes. v. 12. Then the Apostle exhorts his Thessalonian brethren to know, that is, approve, of such as in the good providence of the Lord were placed over them and admonished them in the Lord. And speaking to Timothy his son in the Gospel, he says, 'nevertheless, the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his. And, let every one that nameth the name of Christ, depart from iniquity.' 2 Tim. ii. 19. The Apostle had just been giving some advice to Timothy in reference to the conduct of two persons who had erred concerning the truth, and had been the means of overthrowing the faith of some; and to encourage Timothy at this time of trial, he assures him the foundation standeth sure; they may turn away some from the faith, yet the foundation is the same, it remains, and the Lord knows, or approves of such as are and continue to be his, namely, such as depart from iniquity; he had knowledge of Hymeneus and Philetus, that is, he perceived with certainty that they had erred, and used means to cause others to err; all this Jesus knew, and inspired his servant to publish it; but he did not approve of them, nor of any other excepting such as depart from iniquity. That men may have the approbation of God daily, they must daily and hourly depart from iniquity. We will now

look at what Jesus himself has said upon this subject; 'And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you, depart from me, ye that work iniquity.' A very similar form of expulsion is used by the other evangelists. We ask, what did the blessed Jesus mean, when he said, 'I never knew you?' Did he mean, I have always been ignorant of you? or did he mean, I have never known you with approbation? We think, the Lord Jesus had some knowledge of them, for he calls them workers of iniquity; yea he must have perceived with certainty what they were, or he could not with safety have done what he did in passing sentence upon them, and especially that tremendous one, 'depart, depart from me ye workers of iniquity.' To have passed such a sentence, without knowing their real character, would have cast a shade on his character as a God of wisdom, goodness, holiness, and truth; and our God being wise, holy, good, and true, he could not have thus judged. Again, Jesus in speaking to the foolish virgins saith, 'I know you not.' Math. xxv. 12. Did not Jesus know them? Yes, he had perfect knowledge of them; he well knew that they had suffered their lamps to go out; and for this he calls them foolish, therefore he did not approve of them; had he said I do approve of you, he would have acted inconsistently with himself. We will close this part of the subject with a declaration from one of the Prophets; 'You only have I known of all the families of the earth; therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities.' Amos iii. 2. As much as to say, you are the only people I have known, or approved of, and taken to be my people, to bear my name. I have approved or known you, fed, sustained, and defended you; but, seeing you have sinned against me, forsaken me and have polluted yourselves, now, for this I will punish you. The punishment I will inflict upon you shall be in exact proportion to your iniquities; your iniquities will be measured by the privileges you have enjoyed and the grace abused. Having fixed the meaning of the term, know, and foreknow, being compounded of fore and know, we say, in our judgement, the term foreknow, signifies, to fore-approve or to approve before. Now it is very evident that he must approve of a man, before he appoints him to an office, or destines his course as such a man; this will lead us to notice the question, namely, Whom did he foreknow? As the text saith, 'for whom he did foreknow, them he also did predestinate.' He foreknew such as love him, or he approves of such and only such as love him. The apostle in the 28th verse states without the least disguise, that they are lovers of God—'And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.' And immediately on this the Apostle introduces the words of the text, which lead us to believe, that he had special reference to them; and furthermore the Psalmist says,

'But know that the Lord hath set apart him that is godly for himself: the Lord will hear when I call unto him.' Psa. iv. 3. To show that the Lord takes special care of his people, or that they are highly favoured, we need only notice what is said in the 34 Psa. 15th and 16th verses.—'The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry. The face of the Lord is against them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.' Here contrast the state of the righteous with them that do evil: then, ask, who are the people the Lord favoreth? the righteous, certainly.

They are the people whom Jesus approves, they are the acknowledged people of God, 'they do no iniquity.' Psa. cxix. 3. 'They keep his commandments' and in 'them is the love of God perfected.' To say that sinners were embraced in this number would be saying, that he approved of sinners, whereas, 'his soul hateth' them and will eventually cut them off.

III. To what were they predestinated? '*To be conformed to the image of his Son.*' So saith the Apostle. But, what are we to understand by the phrase 'image of his son?' The term '*image*,' literally signifies, any corporeal representation, a statue, a copy, likeness, semblance, or appearance. Wilson in his Dictionary, on the term Christ, says, it signifies, 1st. The likeness of a person or thing. 2d. Shape or picture set up for divine worship. 3d. Resemblance of God in wisdom or purity—and 4th. an essential, real, and adequate resemblance of the person of another. Parkhurst in his Lexicon on the Greek word, has said it signifies, 1. A corporeal representation, or image—2. An image, resemblance, likeness. 3. The essential or substantial form, the truth, or reality. From an examination of the scriptures we are led to this conclusion, that there is a twofold image of Jesus Christ, to which man must be conformed, to be prepared for the society of heaven. For the sake of distinguishing the one from the other, we will call one his loving image and the other his suffering image. We imagine the Apostle had reference to his loving image, when he said, 'That ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.' Eph. iv. 24. And again, 'And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge, after the image of him that created him.' Col. iii. 10. The image here spoken of embraces supreme love to God, the man who possesses this love to God is holy, he has the loving image of Jesus Christ. This image they had already, for verse 28 they are said to be 'lovers of God.' This they had obtained by faith in Jesus Christ. God in speaking of them draws the line in reference to their future course and this line is noted in our text, and called 'the image of his son,' his suffering image; this image they had not attained, yet they were lovers of

God. If this image was that of holiness, then they *had* attained it, but inasmuch as they had *not* attained it, and were at the same time lovers of God, it must be something different from that, and this difference we conceive to be that which we have just stated, namely, his suffering image, to which we shall now call your attention. Some will say, by what authority do you conclude that the Apostle meant to be so understood? From the general tenour of this chapter. The Apostle in the first sixteen verses speaks of the experience of the saint, that he is delivered 'from the law of sin and death,' that they are 'in the Spirit,' 'after the Spirit,' 'led by the Spirit,' 'received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father,' 'that we are the children of God,' 'and joint heirs with Christ.' This is the state of the persons spoken of in the text, in view of their relation to God. One would be ready to say, that such a people are free from sorrow and affliction, but, experience teaches us the contrary; for the Apostle saith, almost with the same breath in which he says they are joint heirs with Christ, 'if so be that we suffer with him we may be glorified together,' verse 17. 'For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us,' ver. 18. hence he says, 'that we know all things work together for good to them that love God,' ver. 28. All what things? all their sufferings. The Apostle still pursues this subject, in several interrogatives, as follows, 'Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?'' ver. 35. The Apostle mentions in detail the sources of the sufferings of the saints, which are seven in number; and did the saints look no higher than this world, their affections would be separated from Christ, but they look still higher, they look for 'that glory which shall be revealed in us.' If it were possible, the Apostle in the 38th and 39th verse, speaks of their sufferings as greatly increased, and yet he is persuaded that in all these, they would be more than conquerors: 'Neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.' And, to show that the Apostle had reference to the 'image of Christ' in these sufferings, he says in a quotation from the 44th Psalm, 'For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.' As if he had said, these are no more than we may naturally expect from the present constitution of the world; and the prediction of the prophet, who foresaw that a wicked world would always persecute and oppress the followers of Christ. They must be conformed to the image of Christ. The Apostle to the Philippians 1. xxix. 30. saith, 'For unto you it is given in the

behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake; having the same conflict which ye saw in me, and now hear to be in me.' The Apostle had just exhorted his brethren to let their conversation be as becometh the Gospel of Christ, that whether he came to see them, or should hear from them, he might hear, that they stood fast in one spirit, with one mind, striving together for the faith of the gospel, in this course they might expect a very considerable degree of persecution, but they should not be terrified by their adversaries, let their sufferings be as many or as great as they may; be not terrified, keep your minds in peace, and in patience possess your souls. And even this calmness, and quietness of soul in the midst of your sufferings will be to your adversaries an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation and that of God. Again, 'That I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and the *fellowship of his sufferings*, being *made conformable unto his death.*' 'Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect; but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.'—Ch. iii. 10. 12. The Apostle here has reference to sufferings, concerning which as yet he had not been made perfect; he, therefore, exhorts all who had been made perfect in love, to press forward in the path of duty, and they would in the end be made conformable to the image, or death of Christ.

We will now take into consideration the declaration of the blessed Jesus to the Mother of Zebedee's Children. 'And he said unto her, What wilt thou? she saith unto him, Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left, in thy kingdom. But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? they say unto him we are able. And he saith unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with: but to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give; but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father.'—Mat. xx. xxi. xxii. xxiii. (see Mark x. 37, 38, 39, 40. Luke xii. 50.) What did our Lord mean, when he said, Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of? Did he mean to be understood literally, that they should drink out of the same vessel or cup that he did? Did he mean that they should be baptized in the same place and with the same water, with which he was baptized? or did he mean, that he would have to pass through severe trials and endure great sufferings, and that they, if they would be his disciples, must be conformed to his image?

We think, Jesus meant to teach them that to be his disciples, they must make up their minds to suffer for his sake. To this one

point, the Apostle would direct the minds of his Roman brethren, in saying God had predestinated them to be conformed to the image of his son. This leads us to notice

IV. To WHAT END, WERE THEY PREDESTINATED, TO BE CONFORMED TO THE IMAGE OF CHRIST? The Apostle, in our text, says, '*that he might be the first-born among many brethren.*' Parkhurst says it signifies, the first, chief, and principal. Calmet says, it is not always to be understood literally, it is sometimes taken for the prime, most excellent, most distinguished of anything. Bildad the Shuhite said to Job, 'The first-born of death shall devour his strength.' Job. xviii. 13.—that is he shall die the most terrible of deaths. Isaiah says 'the first born of the poor shall feed, and the needy shall lie down in safety,'—Isaiah xiv. 30. Here the phrase, 'the first-born of the poor,' must mean the most miserable of the poor. The Apostle Paul uses the term first-born, in speaking of Jesus Christ, when he says, 'Who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature.'—Col. i. 15. In his person, character, and offices he was and is the most excellent of all personages, the very image of God. Where can one be found whose sufferings have equalled the sufferings of the Messiah? It was in reference to him that Isaiah expressed himself in language like this, 'Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save. Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the wine fat? I have trodden the wine press alone; and of the people there was none with me.'—Isaiah xliii. 1, 2, 3.

Suppose we look at the persecutions he endured; contradictions from sinners; misrepresentations by professors of truth; desertions of his friends in the hour of trial, and last of all the curse of God. Well may it be said Jesus is the first-born or the greatest sufferer that was ever on earth. But he suffered not for himself, but for us, even us, unworthy worms of earth. Now 'if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?'—Luke xxiii. 31. 'It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord. If they have called the master of the house Be-elzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household?' Matt. x. 25. Jesus is the first-born among his saints, and suffered that they might obtain a crown of glory. The apostle saith, 'For both he that sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified, are all of one; for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren.' Jesus is the chief over all his saints on earth, and will be in heaven, and after they have suffered with him here awhile, he will say to them, come up higher; enter ye into the joy of your Lord, and

sit down on his throne, even as he has on his Father's throne; blissful end! heavenly honor!

V. IN WHAT WAY DOES GOD ACCOMPLISH THIS GRAND DESIGN? Moreover, that is, beyond, or more than what has been mentioned, the design, and the subjects of this design have been named, and now we will enter upon the way in which this is to be brought about consistently with his character and the agency of man.

God has predestinated that his children should be conformed to the image of his son. Such, he calls: for whom he did predestinate them he also called. He calls, but how does God call his people? By his word and spirit. The children of God are called by the word of God to come out from the world and 'touch not the unclean thing;' 'to be clean as those that bear the vessels of the Lord.' He calls them to be holy in all their conversation, to live for God, to be humble, and faithful in the discharge of duty to God, to man and to themselves. He calls by his Spirit. By his Spirit he calls men to preach, to exhort, and to rebuke with all long-suffering. No man can thus live and be in friendship with the world; the world will, so long as the carnal mind governs, be opposed, both to God and holy living; for the Apostle saith, 'The carnal mind is enmity against God,'—Rom. viii. 7.—As it was in the days of Abraham, so it was in the time of the Apostle Paul, and so it is now: 'He that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now.'—Gal. iv. 29. Such is the determined hostility of the carnal mind that, as the Apostle hath said, so we see it verified, 'All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.' As long as the professor of religion will satisfy himself with the mere form of godliness, he will find but little, or no opposition; but no sooner does he arouse from his slumbers, and obey the voice of his God, and 'come out from among them, and touch not the unclean thing,' and 'be separate that bear the vessels of the Lord;' 'that will not suffer sin upon their neighbor,' than the strong arm of persecution will be raised and hurl its arrows at him as a child of God. This same spirit has been possessed by the ungodly in all ages of the world; we will notice a case or two. First, we will fix on Joseph, (see the 37th of Genesis). He was the beloved of his father, but by his brethren, he was envied and hated—put into a pit to die—taken up and sold to a stranger as a slave. After having been faithful and useful in his master's service, his master's wife sought to make him sin against God, and then conspired to destroy him. Thus we see him pursued step after step by the enemy of his soul as if bent on his final ruin, and why? because he was faithful, humble, diligent, and obedient in the cause of his God, having an eye single to his glory. If we examine the lives of the Apostles, we shall find, they were not entirely free from per-

secution. Indeed, the blessed Saviour promised them this in the commencement, that they might not be alarmed when it came upon them. Let us listen, for one moment to the blessed Jesus on this point. Mark x. 29. 30. 'Verily I say unto you, there is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel, but he shall receive a hundred fold now in this time, houses and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with *persecutions*, and in the world to come eternal life.' Here the Saviour promises his disciples friends in the labor of love, yet he assures them, that they should meet with opposition from the ungodly, as also from false brethren, as did the great Apostle Paul. Or in the faithful discharge of their duty they should be made conformable to the image of Jesus.

The Apostle, intent on his business, after having preached the gospel in 'Derbe, returned again to Lystra, and to Iconium and to Antioch, confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must, through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God,'—see Acts xiv. 22. The spirit of the gospel and the spirit of the world cannot unite, therefore, they who are living in the faithful discharge of their duty, are destined to a life of persecution, by which means they are conformed to the image of the suffering Jesus. It may be asked, if the Christian is to have a life of suffering, how is his life desirable or happy? It has often been said, and truly said, that the Christian's life is the happiest on earth. Yea, there are none this side heaven, so joyful as the saint of God, even in the midst of all his sufferings. The sum of the whole matter is, that God justifies him, as the Apostle saith, see Rom. viii. 33. 34. 'It is God that justifieth, who is he that condemneth?' 'for whom he calls them he also justifies,' as saith our text. The phrase, to justify, sometimes signifies, to pardon sin, as in Luke xviii. 14. 'This man went down to his house justified rather than the other.' This man found the favor of God in the remission of his sins, while the unhumbled pharisee was looked upon with an eye of disapprobation, and held guilty before God. The Apostle saith, 'By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified,'—see Rom. iii. 20. No soul can have his sins remitted by the most strict attention to the law of Moses, for it is said again,—Rom iv. 2. 'If Abraham our father was justified by works, he had whereof to glory,' that is, restored to the favor of God by works, he had whereof to glory. He was introduced into the favor of God, not by any works of the law, but by an act of God's free grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.

There is yet another sense in which the phrase is used, it signifies, to declare or pronounce one just or righteous. As it is said of

Jesus, that he 'was justified in the spirit.'—Tim. iii. 16. As Parkhurst hath said, to acknowledge, or declare to be just or righteous: He was justified by the Spirit; that is, his high claims of being the son of God, the Redeemer of mankind, was justified, or proved to be true by the descent of the Holy Ghost at his baptism, and the miracles he wrought. God by his Spirit in the hearts of his saints declares to them that they are acquitted from the charges brought against them by the ungodly, and consequently have joy and peace. It signifies, to approve, or commend,—as Mat. xi. 19. 'Wisdom is justified of her children.' Every child of God, approves or commends the wisdom of God in the plan of salvation, and in reference to the Pharisees, Jesus says, Luke xvi. 15. 'Ye are they which justify yourselves before men.' They approved of themselves before men. God approves of all who put their trust and confidence in him, and his favor makes their paradise. Were it not that God justifies them, in the deep waters through which they are called to pass, they would sink to rise no more. They are conscious, that faithful is he who hath called them, and hath said, he will be with them in six troubles, and in the seventh he will not forsake them.

The great Apostle to the Gentiles, could say in the midst of his frequent and most severe sufferings, 'None of these things move me; neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.'—Acts xx. 24. It is often said in reference to the godly man, who is the subject of great persecution, how is it that he gets along with so much joy, and to all appearance is so remarkably happy? I am sure, say they, I should faint in my mind, and give up the cause. Yea, surely, but why? Because thou knowest not the secret of this matter. The fact is, God justifies him. Had this saint of God, as many enemies to encounter, as he has hairs upon his head, or as there are sands on the sea shore, and all of them marshalled under one head, and all united as the heart of one man, and all bent on his destruction, yet, in the midst of all he would possess his mind in peace, and joy in the rock of his salvation; for it is God who justifieth—our God is a strong God, mighty to save—and not a hair of the head shall fall to the ground without his notice. If God be for us, who can be against us? The omnipotence, the truth, the goodness, the holiness, yes, every perfection of God is enlisted in behalf of the saint: as well might poor, feeble, frail man think, with his faint breath, to blow the sun from his orbit, as to destroy the enjoyment of the saint, while God justifies him. When we take this view of the subject we shall not be at all surprised that they joy in tribulation, that they count it all joy, that they are worthy to suffer reproach for the name and Gospel of Jesus. How

can a man be faint hearted, when he has omnipotence for his strength? How can a man be fearful, when he has the presence of such a comforter? or how can he be discouraged when truth has promised grace and glory! How can he say in view of his sufferings, they are too much to bear, when he considers how much Jesus bore for him? He cannot; but will say in the language of the poet,

'Our troubles and our trials here,
Will only make us richer there.'

The more they suffer here the brighter they will shine, 'for whom he justified them he also glorified.' We shall now proceed to inquire,

VI. WHAT IS IMPLIED IN THE LAST MEMBER OF THE TEXT? '*And whom he justified; them he also glorified.*' Nothing is more common than, when we read in the scriptures, of glory, to have our minds, at once, led to contemplate the blessedness of the saints in heaven; and it is very probable, that this one circumstance has been the means of leading many into an error, in reference to our text. A little attention to the scripture, will convince us that it does not always respect eternal life.

Parkhurst, on the Greek word *Doxa* says, it signifies, esteem, glory, honor. Let us look at this definition a few moments; the word occurs in Luke xiv. 10, and is rendered, *worship*, 'Then shalt thou have worship in the presence of them that sit at meat with thee.' Thou shalt have worship; the worship of God, in paying a due respect, veneration, and homage to the Deity. And in the case before us, we understand by it, that the person, who should first go and take his seat in the lowest room, and afterward should be directed to go up higher, he should have worship, or due respect shown him, or he should be glorified.

In the gospel by John v. 44, the term is used twice, and each time rendered honor, 'How can ye believe which receive honor one of another, and seek not the honor that cometh from God only.' Again, the same term is used by Peter i. 24 and rendered glory. 'All flesh is grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass.'

Parkhurst, on the word Doxazo, says, to glorify, make glorious or honorable, or cause to appear so. In John xi. 4, it is said, 'That the Son of God might be glorified thereby.' Here we are informed that Lazarus was sick; his sister sent to Jesus, and informed him; Jesus said to them, this sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God. By this sickness Jesus was to be glorified. But how? Was he by this to be taken up to heaven? No. By this, Jesus would be glorified, inasmuch, as he would show by his power that he was God, and consequently, be honored. Jesus said to his Father, 'I have glorified thee on earth. I have finished the

work thou gavest me to do.'—John xvii. 4. If it be asked, How did Jesus honor or glorify the Father on earth? We have the answer in the text from his own mouth, 'I have finished the work thou gavest me to do.'—John xvii. 4. Jesus saith, 'Herein is my Father glorified that ye bear much fruit.'—John xv. 8. The Father is honored or glorified by his disciples, in the fruit they bear, by which they claim the character of his disciples. The apostle in our text speaks in the past tense, and says 'them he also glorified;' by which we learn, that they (the lovers of God) had been glorified already. That is they had been highly honored. Dr. A. Clarke says the Greek word Doxa, which is rendered *glory*, and Doxazo to glorify, both mean, to render *illustrious* or *eminent*. It may be asked, how are they rendered illustrious or eminent? David saith, Psa. cxlix. 4. 'He will beautify the meek with salvation.' He will honor or glorify them with salvation. What greater glory can man desire on earth than this? God preserves and defends his people in the midst of the furnace, and renders them eminent by their gifts and grace.

The apostle in Cor. 15, speaking of the glory of bodies celestial and terrestrial, says, 'The glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another.' As 'there is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars, for one star differeth from another star in glory.' We are doubtless to understand by the term glory, the excellence, beauty or perfection of the sun, moon and stars. There is an excellence or beauty belonging to the saint, which is not discoverable in his first enjoyment of the grace of God, but, in his subsequent improvement of this grace renders him an eminent and worthy disciple. We will take an instance or two to illustrate this point. See the state of Joseph, when he said, 'How shall I commit this great wickedness and sin against God.' While in prison—and after being delivered therefrom, Did not the grace of patience, forgiveness, and faithfulness render him an honorable saint? Yes. Again, we see Daniel, a servant of the Most High God, cast into the lions' den. When the king came to the den, he said, 'O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions?' Then Daniel said, 'my God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me: forasmuch as before him innocency was found in me.' Did he seek for revenge after he was delivered from the den? No, he possessed too much of the spirit of the gospel to do this. Read the history of Paul and Silas while in prison; they prayed, and sang praises, God heard, and delivered them. The jailor alarmed from his sleep, seeing the prison door open, he drew out his sword, and would have killed himself, supposing the prisoners had fled. But

Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, do thyself no harm; for we are all here.

The jailor said after he had brought them out, sirs, what must I do to be saved? Thus we see God glorified in making the apostles the honored instruments of his salvation. Then the apostle had a fine opportunity of preaching Jesus and the resurrection. What an honor conferred on man to preach Jesus under such circumstances! and in the conclusion we might name Peter, an ignorant or an unlearned fisherman preaching Jesus, and honored as being the means of the salvation of thousands. This gospel treasure we have in earthen vessels that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us. From this subject we infer

1., That notwithstanding this portion of the scripture has been made to favor the doctrine of a limited salvation, yet, in fact, no such sentiment was taught by the apostle, and we are authorised to offer salvation to all men by faith in Jesus Christ.

2., That it is honorable to man to have the privilege of suffering in the service of him who suffered so much for us.

3., That all the sufferings of the people of God, as the people of God, do in the present life work for their good, while they look at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. TO GOD BE ALL THE GLORY. AMEN.

THE HEAVENLY JERUSALEM.

BY JAMES MONTGOMERY.

JERUSALEM! my happy home!
Name ever dear to me!
When shall my labors have an end,
In Joy, and peace, and thee?

When shall these eyes thy heaven-built walls
And pearly gates behold?
Thy bulwarks with salvation strong,
And streets of shining gold?

Oh when, thou city of my God,
Shall I thy courts ascend,
Where congregations ne'r break up,
And Sabbaths have no end?

There happier bowers than Eden bloom,
Nor sin nor sorrow know:
Bless'd seats! through rude and stormy scenes,
I onward press to you.

Why should I shrink from pain or woe?
Or feel at death dismay?
I've Canaan's godly land in view,
And realms of endless day.

Apostles, martyrs, prophets there,
Around my Saviour stand;
And soon my friends in Christ below
Will join the glorious band.

Jerusalem! my happy home!
My soul still pants for thee;
Then shall my labors have an end,
When I thy face shall see.

SERMON XI.

THE WORLD WEIGHED IN THE BALANCES OF JEHOVAH AND FOUND WANTING.

Delivered in the Methodist Episcopal Chapel in Providence, R. I. July 3d, 1832, during the session of the New England Conference in that city, and in Middletown, Conn., Sabbath afternoon, September 2d, 1832.

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Tekel; Thou art weighed in the balances and art found wanting: DANIEL v. 27.

THE imagery of the Bible is peculiarly sublime and impressive. The Bible abounds with moral paintings, exquisitely beautiful, and inimitably grand. They are manifestly the work of a master's pencil, 'dipped in colors native well.' The Scriptures resemble a gallery of paintings of various descriptions; some representing the varied and sublime scenery of the natural world, and others, abounding in moral representations, exhibiting the various, minute, and opposite shades of moral character. And all who enter this gallery of pictures, drawn by the unerring pencil of inspiration, may see their own portraits, perfectly resembling life. The book of Daniel contains several moral paintings of a most instructive and imposing character. Of this character is the one in the chapter before us. In this exquisite painting, we have a striking representation of a royal feast.

It consists of two parts. The first represents a most impious scene of mirth and dissipation. It exhibits the Chaldean king in the royal palace, surrounded by his wives, his concubines, and his most eminent courtiers, drinking wine in the consecrated vessels of gold and of silver, which his father Nebuchadnezzar, had taken out of the temple at Jerusalem—and in the midst of their cups, they are singing songs in praise of their gods of gold, silver, brass, iron, wood and stone, and filling to the brim the cup of their iniquity. But

suddenly the whole scene changes, and in the second part of this moral picture, Belshazzar is weighed in the balances of justice, and the fingers of a man's hand are seen writing over against the candlestick, upon the plaster of the wall of his palace, in three words, the humiliating estimate of his moral character and the sentence of his condemnation.

The sight of these mysterious words, greatly troubles the king. His countenance changes, and his whole frame becomes agitated. All his wise men, magicians, and astrologers are immediately summoned into his presence, that the writing may be read, and its meaning explained. He offers costly presents and distinguishing honors to the one who shall expound the writing. But as the magi are totally unable to comprehend the writing, the terror and confusion of the king's mind become greatly increased. At the instance of the queen, Daniel, one of the Hebrew captives is sent for, who receives from the king, the same offer of honors and presents, which had been made to the magicians, if he would explain the writing. Daniel piously declines the offer made him, but readily performs his request. He first animadverts upon his past life, and reproves him with great plainness for his base ingratitude to God,—for his profanation of the vessels which were consecrated to the service of the Most High—and for giving the glory due the true God to dumb idols; and then proceeds to the interpretation of the writing, which is this; *Mene*, *Tekel*, *Upharsin*. Each word stands for a sentence; *Mene*, signifies numbered, intimating that the days both of the king's life and reign, were numbered. *Tekel*, signifies weighed, meaning that he had been weighed in the balances of Jehovah and found wanting. *Upharsin* and *Peres* signify *divided* and *Persian*; intimating that his kingdom was divided and given to the Medes and Persians.

Though a part of the writing upon the wall of the king's palace, is applicable only to Belshazzar, the last Chaldean king, yet, that part which comprises our text, should be viewed as of universal interest and importance. It must be of eminent service to every student in divine philosophy,

> 'In searching the causes out of good and ill,
> Profoundly calculating their effects,
> Far past the bounds of Time; and balancing,
> In the arithmetic of future things,
> The loss and profit of the soul to all
> Eternity———.'

Let us, my friends, endeavor to enter upon the contemplation of the truths suggested by the text, with deep and devout attention, lest, ere we leave this holy temple, God should in wrath, write opposite each one of us, upon the wall, in characters of fire, *Tekel:*

Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting. The words of the text direct the attention,—First, *To an infallible standard for testing moral character.*

THE BALANCES.

Second, *To the process of testing moral worth.*

THOU ART WEIGHED.

Third, *To an humiliating estimate of many of the subjects of God's moral empire with respect to moral worth.*

FOUND WANTING.

Let us, first, *Consider the perfect standard for testing moral worth, the balances.* By moral worth is meant that whole assemblage of virtues and excellencies comprehended in holiness, or the moral image of God, in distinction from all the endowments of nature, whether intellectual, physical, social, or civil. That the term balances is used in the sense of a moral test, is evident,

1. *From the circumstances immediately connected with the text.* Belshazzar was a moral agent, a subject of God's moral government; but he had abused his agency in violating the law, and setting at defiance the authority of that government. The writing upon the wall of his palace, contained the humiliating estimate of his moral worth, announced his fearful doom, and was written in a miraculous manner, consequently under the direct agency of God, and in immediate connexion with the administration of his moral government. It is manifest, therefore, from the manner and the connexion in which the term 'balances' was used by the moral governor of the world, in his address to Belshazzar, that he must have used it in the sense of a moral test.

2. *The word balances is used in the sense of a standard for testing moral worth in other passages.* Said Job,—'Let me be weighed in an even balance,' or more literally, 'Let God weigh me in the balances of justice, that he may know mine integrity.' In this passage, Job expresses a readiness to have the purity of his heart, and the righteousness of his life, tested by an unerring standard of moral worth, the holy law of God, feeling conscious, that when so tested, he should not be found wanting. The Hebrew monarch, when surveying the moral character of many around him, said, 'Surely men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree are a lie; to be laid in the balance, they are altogether lighter than vanity.' In this quotation, the two ranks of men named, are represented as vanity, so that when put together in one scale and the law of God, the test of all moral excellence in the opposite, both would ascend in the scale.

3. *The term 'balances,' being used in the sense of a standard for testing moral worth, emblematically implies the divine constitution, under which God hath placed our world.* This divine consti-

tution comprises two parts; *legal*, and *evangelical*, or the *law*, and the *gospel*. The legal part of this constitution, or the moral government of God, is coeval with the existence of moral agents, because there could be no moral agency, without moral government. And as there can be no rational government where there is no revealed law, the law of God must be coeval in its revelation with his moral government, and is in its principles, coeval with Jehovah himself. 'The law, (speaking after the manner of men,) is a copy of the eternal mind; a transcript of the divine nature; yea, it is the fairest offspring of the everlasting Father, the brightest efflux of his essential wisdom, the visible beauty of the Most High.'* The law which God has established as the law of his moral government, and extended equally over all moral agents is in its fundamental principles essentially the same, which are thus expressed by the christian lawgiver, 'thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy strength, with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself.' As one of these principles is founded upon the natural relation of all intelligent creatures to each other, and the other on their natural relation to God, the law involved in these two great first principles, may be presumed to be universal. And as it is immutable and eternal, it must necessarily relate to every intelligent creature forever.

The divine law as expressed in its two first principles, is admirably adapted 'to unite all rational creatures to God, as the common Lord and Father, and to each other, as fellow subjects and brethren.'† And out of one, or the other of these two comprehensive commandments, arise all particular precepts, whether they relate to the Supreme Ruler, or to fellow subjects. And all particular laws imply the general one. The decalogue engraven by the finger of God upon the tables of stone, the injunctions and instructions of the prophets, and even the whole of the preceptive parts of divine revelation are implied in these two fundamental principles of the divine law. 'On these two commandments hang the law and the prophets.' 'They are like the first and last links of a chain, all the intermediate depend on them.'‡ The law of God is *absolutely perfect*. No imperfection can possibly be attached to it. It is *perfect* in its *sanctions*. A law without sanctions, would be powerless, consequently imperfect. The sanctions with which the divine law is clothed, are most alarming to the *fears*, or most enlivening to the *hopes* of all moral agents. These sanctions accompanied the promulgation of the law, as motives to obedience; for as all rational beings were made free, they were evidently designed to yield a *willing service*, consequently an irresistible agency could have no place in their gov-

* Wesley's Sermons.
† Watson's Institutes. ‡ Dr. A. Clark's Commentary.

ernment, moral motives only, could *be applied* to induce *obedience*. And in the tremendous sanctions of God's law there can be no want of reasonable motive to induce obedience, as one sanction involves all the fearful consequences of transgression, and the other, the eminently glorious reward of obedience.

The divine law is *perfect* in its *requirements*. The rights of all moral agents are respected, and all the injunctions and prohibitions of this law are emanations from the absolute moral perfection of God, and are designed to promote the highest happiness of his moral kingdom. The Scriptures are most copious in their commendations of the divine law. 'The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes; the fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever; the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. The law is holy, and the commandment holy, just and good.'

The moral law is inflexible in its demands on all moral agents for universal obedience, because they are all placed under the law. Those who have not the revealed law, have a law written in their hearts, and 'are a law unto themselves,' and because all were originally capacitated to yield perfect obedience. 'God is not a hard master reaping where he has not sown, and gathering where he has not strewed. His commandments are not grievous.' If God should relax the rigor of his law in any degree, it would be ruinous to the interests of moral beings, yea, it would endanger the happiness of his whole moral kingdom. God has a right to be obeyed, as he is the proprietor and Lord of all creatures, and the absolute rectitude of his nature will not permit him to abate that right in the least degree. But will he not relax his law in respect to fallen man? By no means. God will not relax aught of his law in reference to sinful man; he requires of him perfect obedience to the moral law, and even more than this, he demands of him obedience to another law, called by St. Paul, 'the law of faith.'

This law or doctrine respects the provisions of the gospel for the salvation of the world, secured by the death and mediation of IMMANUEL, (God with us) in perfect harmony with the essential rectitude of God's moral government. Obedience to 'the law of faith,' will secure the pardon of all past transgressions of the moral law, will absolve the believer from that law as a covenant of works or system of salvation, but not as a rule of life; it will also secure through the agency of the divine spirit, the moral renovation of the heart, and the disposition and the power to keep the moral law. To those who believe in Christ, he gives power to become the sons of God; consequently power to keep the law of God. The Gospel worketh effectually in those who believe.

The law, or doctrine of faith, sustains a very important relation

to the moral law; and so far from implying the abrogation of that law, it most undeniably implies its *eternal obligation* and *inflexible character*. Obedience to the law of faith, honors the moral law, and is an acknowledgment of an imperious obligation to observe it as a rule of life. Evangelical faith necessarily implies obedience to the whole law of God, because 'faith works by love,' and 'love is the fulfiling of the law.' This second part of the divine constitution, which God hath extended over the whole human family, embraces the whole Gospel, or system of divine truth, and is clothed with the same momentous sanctions, or motives to obedience, as those of the legal part, or the moral law. 'He that believeth shall be saved,—he that believeth not shall be damned.' 'He that believeth hath everlasting life, he that believeth not hath not life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.' This constitution is in both its parts the result of the eternal moral perfection of God. He will, therefore, strictly maintain and vindicate all its principles; and it is just and right that he should, because they are all, in every respect and degree, perfect. Were God to relax any of the principles of this constitution, it would argue imperfection in Him, and would bring His whole government into disrespect in view of his rational creatures, just as any civil constitution would be brought into contempt by the relaxation of its authority.

The divine constitution under which we live, differs essentially from all human constitutions in the originality, sublimity, grandeur, purity, and pervading extent of its principles. It addresses itself to inward sentiments and feelings, as well as to external acts. It condemns a sinful heart, as well as a sinful life. It condemns the first wanderings of the affections, as well as acts of idolatry,—passion in the soul, as well as passionate acts,—feelings of vindictiveness, as well as vindictive acts,—impure desires, as well as wanton acts,—and insincerity, equally with open breaches of covenant. It pronounces all these first conceptions of evil, as really criminal, as overt acts of evil. This constitution is exceedingly broad, demanding a perfect heart, a blameless and useful life. It is the purest in its spirit, the most extensive in its application, the most beneficial in its effects, the most spirit-stirring, and spirit-ennobling in its motives, and the most complete in its whole machinery, of any constitution ever contemplated by created minds, or that infinite wisdom could devise, neither the laws of Confucius, of Zoroaster, of Lycurgus, and Solon, nor the Institutes of Mense, nor the Republic of Plato, nor the various systems of the Grecian ethic philosophers, nor the Koran of Mahommed, present any competition to this constitution, nor are deserving of a comparison with it.

This constitution comprises the balances of Jehovah in which he weighs the world. As the constitution under which God has placed

the world, is absolutely perfect, so the balances in which he weighs the world are absolutely perfect, consequently *an infallible standard* for testing moral character.

II. *Consider the process of testing moral worth. Thou art weighed.* The Most High weighs all the subjects of his moral government in his balances, to test their loyalty to himself. He ever holds his balances in his hand with the subjects of his moral empire in one scale, and his holy requirements in the other, so that in reference to moral character, they are every moment impartially *weighed* or *tested.* If it be true, that the process of testing moral worth, is momently advancing with every moral agent, is it not a most solemn, searching, and impressive truth? But on what does this truth rest for its support? Not on any vague hypothesis, but upon the most conclusive arguments.

1. *This momentous truth is evident from the infinite intelligence of the moral Sovereign of the Universe.* He is both omnipresent and omniscient. Exclaimed David, 'O Lord, thou hast searched me, and known me, thou knowest my down sitting, and mine uprising; thou understandest my thoughts afar off. Thou compasseth my path and my lying down, and art well acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether. Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me. Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there. If I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. If I say, surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me, yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day; the darkness and the light are both alike to thee.' It is also written, 'If we have forsaken the name of our God, or stretched out our hands to a strange God, shall not God search this out? for he knoweth the secrets of the heart.' And again we read, 'neither is there any creature, that is not manifest in his sight; but all things are naked and open unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.' 'We must not,' says the eloquent Saurin, 'as some philosophers have done, contemplate the Deity, as a point fixed in the universality of beings; but we may justly contemplate the universality of beings as a point, and the Deity as an immense eye, which sees all that passes in that point, all that can possibly pass there. God is an infinite spirit; with one look he beholdeth the universe. He sees all, veils the most impenetrable, darkness the most thick, distances the most immense, can conceal nothing from his knowledge. Soar to the utmost heights, fly into the remotest climates, wrap thyself in the blackest darkness, every where thou wilt be under his eye.'

2. *That the process of testing moral worth is momently going on, is manifest from the infinite regard, which the Deity is represented as possessing for his own glory and the honor of his moral kingdom.* His language is most emphatic on this point. 'Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is under the earth, thou shalt not bow down to them; for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generations of them that hate me; and shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.' 'Take heed unto yourselves, lest ye forget the covenant of the Lord your God, which he made with you, and make you a graven image, or the likeness of any thing, which the Lord thy God hath forbidden thee. For the Lord thy God is a consuming fire, even a jealous God. God is jealous and the Lord revengeth, and is furious; the Lord will take vengeance on his adversaries, and he reserveth wrath for his enemies.' These passages are most strikingly descriptive of God's determination to maintain his high prerogatives as a moral Sovereign. He not only sees all the subjects of his moral empire, but he sees them as their Lord to whom they are amenable for their conduct. It was in the character of a Sovereign, that he beheld the conduct of the antedeluvians. 'God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart, was only evil continually. The earth was corrupt before God; and the earth was filled with violence. And God looked upon the earth, and beheld it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth.' The abounding wickedness of that generation greatly displeased the Most High, and caused his anger to wax hot against them. But Noah being a just man, found grace in the eyes of the Lord. Again, at another period, it is said, 'God looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God.' And when he had weighed them in his balances, and thus tested their moral worth, he says of them, 'They are all gone aside, they are altogether become filthy; there is none that doeth good no not one.' This is a true representation of God's constant inspection of the vast family of man. Job, inquired, 'What is man, that thou shouldst magnify him? and that thou shouldst set thine heart upon him? and that thou shouldst visit him every morning, and try him every moment?' 'He knoweth vain men, he seeth wickedness also; will he not consider it? If I sin then, thou markest me, and thou wilt not acquit me of mine iniquity. If I be wicked, woe unto me. Thou tellest my wanderings—are they not in thy book? The Lord's throne is in heaven; his eyes behold, his eye-lids try the children of men.'

Is it not undeniably evident from these Scripture quotations, that all moral agents are ever being weighed in the balances of God? Is it not manifest, that God beholds them as a Sovereign? and that all the violations of both parts of the divine constitution, in thought, word, or deed, are both perfectly known and strictly marked?

3. *This truth is implied in the strict process of the final judgment, and the perfect equity of its decisions.* No moral agent, or moral action will be overlooked in the process of the last judgment. It is written, 'Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth, and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes; but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil. Until the Lord come, who will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the councils of the heart. In that day he shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to the Gospel. Who will render to every man according to his deeds.' As to the decisions of the last great day, the Scriptures are most emphatic in ascribing a perfect righteousness to them. 'Who will judge the world in righteousness. God shall judge the people with equity.' The day of judgment is emphatically called, 'The day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God.' In order to the strict and just process of the final judgment, all moral actions must be observed and weighed as they are put forth by moral agents. And the fact, that all the sins of the righteous will have been forgiven, does not detract aught from this argument. It is, I believe, a popular, and a scriptural sentiment, that every action of every individual of the human family, will pass in review at the judgment, though the sins of the righteous will not be exhibited to their condemnation, but to magnify the unsearchable riches of divine grace in their forgiveness. From these three arguments, drawn from revelation, the conclusion is irresistible, that all moral agents are every moment weighed in the balances of equity, or tested in respect to the *Law* and the *Gospel*.

Let this impressive truth be graven in the rock forever. Think of it, ye careless ones! Think of it, ye christians! Remember, that God sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and ever weigheth you in his balances! Say not, it is incredible, 'For he measureth the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meteth out heaven with a span, and comprehendeth the dust of the earth in a measure, and weigheth the mountains in scales and the hills in a balance. Behold, the nations are as a drop of the bucket, and accounted as the small dust of the balance; behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing.' Is he not then able to weigh at the same instant, successively, every subject of his moral empire? 'Hast thou not known, hast

thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary. Is anything too hard for the Lord? This leads us,

III., To an humiliating estimate of many of the subjects of God's moral empire, with respect to moral worth. Found wanting.

Would time permit, we would introduce a great variety of characters, under this head to illustrate our subject; but we can only examine three. This estimate is fearfully true.

1. *Of all who live in habitual rebellion against God.* We appeal 'to the law and to the testimony.' 'Know ye not, that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolators, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.' Who will presume to affirm, that the above characters are not found wanting? Of the multitudes, whether in christian or pagan countries, who keep not God's law, it may be said—'Even when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations and their foolish hearts were darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed forever. For this cause, God gave them up to vile affections. And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient, being filled with all unrighteousness. So they are without excuse.'

Let all these be laid in the balances together, and they would be found light as vanity. And though they may never have seen the burning hand of God, writing in characters of fire, the sentence of their condemnation upon the walls of their tabernacles, they have doubtless, at times, felt the sentence of death within themselves—felt the keen accusations and upbraidings of a reproving conscience.

2. *The estimate in the text is true of all mere moralists, or nominal christians.* This class stands on much higher ground than the preceding in external appearance. Many make high pretensions to moral worth, though the Christian code possesses no more authority in their view, than any human system of ethics. But all the pretensions of mere moralists to moral worth, or goodness, are annihilated by the humiliating declaration of Scripture. All have sinned and come short of the glory of God. Now we know, that whatsoever things the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world become guilty before God. Therefore by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in his sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.' 'For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one

point, he is guilty of all.' He is as really guilty as though he had broken every one of the commandments. O ye moralists, have you never offended against the divine law in one instance? Are you blameless touching the law? Have you from your childhood perfectly kept the whole law? If not, you are verily found wanting. For having once transgressed the law, justification by the works of the law, is morally impossible. For the law knows no mercy; makes no provision for pardon—but worketh wrath, and dooms the transgressor to punishment. 'For as many as are under the works of the law, are under the curse; for it is written, cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.' It follows, therefore, that all who are expecting justification by the works of the law, are exposed to the tremendous curse of God's law. And verily, those who merely pay tithe of mint, and anise, and cummin, and omit the weightier matters of the law; judgment, mercy, and faith, have written against them in the book of God's remembrance—wanting—wanting!

3. Is not this humiliating estimate true of many within the pale of the visible church? Is it not as true now as it was in olden time, that all are not Israel, who are *of* Israel? Christ, it is true, has made ample provision for the sanctification of his church. He 'purchased the church with his own blood. Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word; that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.' 'And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ; till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ; that we henceforth be no more children tossed to and fro, and carried about by every wind of doctrine by the slight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love, may grow up unto him in all things, which is the head, even Christ.'

Correspondent to these provisions for the perfection of the church, are the obligations of all, who enter within its visible pale. They are under covenant obligations to keep perfectly both parts of the divine constitution—to observe strictly what is written in the book of the *Law*, or in the book of the *Gospel*. But how deficient are multitudes of professing Christians in the spirit and degree of their obedience. How many fall far below the letter of the law, as well as its spirit. How few perfectly observe the golden rule, 'Do to

others, as ye would that they should do unto you.' How deficient are many in that faith, which is of the operation of God, which works by love, purifies the heart and overcomes the world; that faith, which is the *subsistence* of things hoped for, and the *demonstration* of things not seen. How deficient are many in that hope, which maketh not ashamed, which is sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the vail.

How few possess in an eminent degree that charity or love, without which the most splendid talents and gifts are as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal, and the most costly offerings are as nothing. How few possess that charity, which suffereth long and is kind, that envieth not, that vaunteth not itself; is not puffed up, that doth not behave itself unseemly, that seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; that rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth that beareth all things, believeth all things, and that never faileth. That charity, which is the bond of perfectness. How few exhibit in full the influence of that wisdom, which cometh from above, which is pure, peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. How few are fully clothed with humility—give all diligence to make their calling and election sure—to cleanse themselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit; perfecting holiness in the fear of God. How few pray without ceasing and in everything give thanks. How few walk in the light as God is in the light, being cleansed from all sin by the blood of Christ. Alas! were God to write out in words of flame, upon the walls of his sanctuaries, the true estimate of the moral worth of all within the pale of the visible church: wanting, wanting, would be written against multitudes. And doubtless many would turn pale at a full disclosure of their real characters.

Are not many Christian parents, guardians, and masters, deficient in the fulfilment of their obligations to the children entrusted to their care? Do all who are entrusted with the guardianship of children feel a deep solicitude for their spiritual welfare? Do they train them up for God and heaven? Do they bring them up in the *discipline* and *instruction* of the Lord? Do they teach them all the words, or the principles of the divine constitution to which they are amenable for their thoughts, words, and actions? Do they talk of these principles when they sit in their houses, and when they walk by the way, when they lie down, and when they rise up, and bind them for a sign upon their hands, and have them as frontlets between their eyes, and write them upon the posts of their houses, and upon their gates?

Are not many ministers, the angels of the church, deficient in discharging the high functions of their awfully responsible office? They may not be wanting in well turned periods, or in metaphysical

subtleties, or in human eloquence ; but are not many wanting in the spirit of power, of love, and of a sound mind ? Are they not wanting in love for the truth as it is in Jesus Christ, and in zeal for its universal diffusion ? Do their hearts burn for the salvation of souls ? Do they know nothing among the people, but Christ and him crucified ? Do they glory in nothing, save in the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ ? Do they continually weep between the porch and the altar, saying, spare thy people, O Lord, and give not thy heritage to reproach ? Are there not many in the visible church, both in the ministry and membership, who are as graves which appear not ? who are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness ? Even so, do not they also, outwardly, appear righteous unto men, but within they are full of hypocrisy and iniquity ?

Is not the church fearfully wanting in missionary enterprise ? It was announced as the purpose of God, nearly eighteen hundred years ago, 'To make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which, from the beginning of the world, hath been hid in God ; to the intent, that now, unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places, might be known by the *church*, the manifold wisdom of God.' In perfect harmony with this purpose, was the mandate of Christ to his church. 'Go into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature.' Had the church during the whole period of her history, strictly adhered to the spirit of this solemn mandate, the whole world ere this, would have been converted to Christianity—the moral gloom which now envelopes so large a portion of it, and the darkness, the gross darkness, which now covers many nations, would long since have fled before the glorious and powerful beams of the Sun of Righteousness. 'The heathen would have been given to Christ for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession.' 'The saints of the Most High would have taken the kingdom to possess it forever and ever.' And the visible church would now have looked gloriously from Zion's hill.

> 'Clothed with the sun, and in her train the moon,
> And on her head a coronet of stars,
> And girdling round her waist, with heavenly grace,
> The bow of mercy bright ; and in her hand
> Immanuel's cross, her sceptre, and her hope.'

But is there not a most striking contrast between this description of what the state of the church, and of the world might now have been, and what they really are ? Is not the church fearfully wanting when weighed in the balances, in its collective character ? Do we not see 'wanting,' emblazoned on her very banners ? There are many, however, within the pale of the visible church, who have not

defiled their garments, and who shall walk with Christ in white, because they are worthy—whose rejoicing is the testimony of a good conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, they have their conversation in the world. These are true lights, which twinkle amid the gloom of a benighted world; but how few are they, in comparison with those both within and without the church, who are found wanting. For many, alas! very many of the subjects of God's moral empire, are found wanting; God hath concluded, or shut up, a large portion of the world under sin; he hath concluded them in unbelief; keeps them under the law, shut up; that is, they are under the arrest of justice as transgressors of both the Law and the Gospel, until they shall believe to the saving of their souls, or the time shall come for the execution of the penal sanctions of the divine constitution upon them. 'Surely every man walketh in a vain show. Verily, every man at his best estate, is altogether vanity.'

We learn from this subject,

1st, *That the ruin and misery of man are self-procured.* He was made in a high state of moral perfection, and placed under a constitution perfect, and the best adapted to secure his highest happiness. He received from God, all that he could receive, consistent with his agency; was created holy, without any bias to evil, capable of standing, though free to fall. But he abused his agency,

> 'He ate the interdicted fruit, and fell,
> And in his fall, his universal race,
> For they in him by delegation were,
> In him to stand or fall, to live or die.'

'Through the disobedience of one, many were made sinners.' But God did not abandon man to the fell consequences of the first offence, his grace abounded towards man. He hath set a glorious hope before the world to which all may fly for refuge, and by which they may draw nigh unto God. This hope is the atonement made by Immanuel for the whole world. 'For God so loved the world, that he sent his only begotten Son into the world, that whosoever believeth on him, should not perish, but have everlasting life.' On the ground of the atonement, the execution of the sentence against moral delinquency is suspended, long-suffering is exercised, and a day of gracious visitation is secured, during which all may obtain pardon or acquittal from the sentence of condemnation, and a meetness for the inheritance of the saints in light, God is in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, and makes the most alluring propositions to all. To every individual, therefore, on whom his frown rests, and the tremendous curse of the law flashes its eternal terrors, God can justly say, as he did to ancient Israel, 'Thou hast destroyed thyself.'

2. *We conclude that the dispensations of God towards our world, are justly marked with a punitive character.* Sin has tarnished the glory of this lower world, and blighted the prospects of man. The history of man is dark and deeply shaded with gloom. The essential rectitude of God, and the interests of his moral kingdom, require an expression of divine displeasure against sin. And in various ages of the world, in his penal and judicial visitations on sinful individuals, and nations, who have filled up the measure of their iniquity, Jehovah has come forth arrayed in awful emblems of tremendous wrath. He has appeared in thunder, in lightning, and in storm. He has made the consuming fire an emblem of his presence. He thunders in the heavens, and gives out his voice. He sends out his arrows against his enemies and scatters them. He shoots out lightnings and discomfits them. Before him goes the pestilence ; burning coals go forth at his feet ; the nations are driven asunder ; the everlasting mountains are scattered ; the perpetual hills bow. Wherefore were the great and powerful cities and empires of antiquity overthrown ? They were weighed and found wanting. Wherefore were God's ancient and covenant people rejected, cast off, and blotted from the map of the world ? They were weighed in the balances and found wanting. Wherefore have many modern nations been visited with exterminating judgments? Wherefore are the judgments of God now abroad in the earth ? Wherefore is the pestilence suffered to walk in darkness, and destruction to rage at noon-day ? Wherefore has the *Asiatic Cholera* been commissioned as an angel of death to slay fifty millions of the human family, and to spread terror and alarm through all the nations of the earth ? Wherefore are there signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming in the earth ? The answer to all these solemnly interesting questions is, the nations have been weighed in the balances and found wanting; and 'God is speaking unto them in his wrath, and vexing them in his sore displeasure, visiting them for their iniquities.'

3. *We infer that the course of moral delinquents is imminently perilous.* The divine constitution secures eternal blessedness to the obedient, to those who obey both its parts; but dooms the transgressors of either the law, or the gospel, to the severest inflictions of divine wrath. And the execution of the penalty of the law, is equally certain with the bestowment of the reward of obedience. The appointment of the sanctions of the divine constitution, and their execution, perfectly harmonise with the moral perfection of God. 'For the work of a man shall he render unto him, and cause every man to find according to his ways; yea, surely God will not do wickedly, neither will the Almighty pervert judgment.' It fol-

lows, therefore, that the ultimate execution of the penal sanctions of the divine constitution upon all moral delinquents, who are such when their term of trial terminates, is certain. None who are then found wanting in moral worth, can possibly escape. But are there not many in this assembly, who have now been weighed and found wanting? Are there not many here in the morning of life, who ascend in the scale, and concerning each of whom, it may be said, 'one thing thou lackest?' O remember, all ye, who are found wanting, that life, and death, are set before you, and that on the choice you make your all depends. Will you longer kick against the goads of conscience? Will you rush upon the bossy shield of the Omnipotent, and brave the thunders of eternal wrath? Who among you can dwell with devouring fire? Who among you can endure everlasting burnings?

In view of your imminent peril, I beseech you, in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God—escape for your lives; look not behind you, neither stay ye in all the plain; escape to the mountain,—to Calvary,—to the Cross, lest ye be consumed; lest the astounding echo of wanting!—wanting, in tones of thunder, through the deep caverns of perdition, shall eternally fall on your ears;—lest ye sink in the blackness of darkness forever, where their worm dieth not, and the fire shall never be quenched. *He that is wise, is wise for himself; but he that scorneth, he alone must bear it.*

SERMON XII.

THE SALVATION OF THE LOST.

'For the Son of Man is come to seek and to save, that which was lost.' LUKE xix, 10.'

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THE subject we have before us is connected with a short, but interesting history of Zaccheus, a noted publican or Roman tax gatherer, who lived in or near Jericho, in the land of Judea. He had heard, it seems, the fame of the extraordinary personage called JESUS, who, at that time, was exciting very considerable interest in that country, on account of the wonders which he both spoke and wrought. And feeling desirous, in common with the multitude, of seeing the Saviour, from which he was prevented (being small of stature,) by the multitude which surrounded him, he ran before the crowd 'and climbed up into a sycamore tree,' that he might look down over the heads of the people and see to better advantage.

But when Jesus came to the place and saw him, he said 'Zaccheus, make haste and come down; for to day I must abide at thy house.' And he came down 'and received him joyfully.' But the Pharisees, considering a Jew who would receive an office under the Roman government, as riveting the chains which bound their nation to a foreign yoke, viewed him as an apostate from God and a traitor to his country, and therefore objected to our Lord's making this visit,—alledging that he had 'gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner.' This visit, however, had a very salutary effect upon Zaccheus, which was immediately evinced in the spirit of benevolence, which prompted him to 'give half of his goods to the poor;' and also in the spirit of justice, which prompted him to make ample restitution in case he had 'taken anything from any man by false accusation.'

This evidence of penitence and piety on the part of Zaccheus, would have been cheerfully admitted by the Pharisees in all ordinary cases, but their intolerent disposition towards men of his calling was such, that they refused it in *his* case. Jesus, therefore, proceeded to justify his visit to the house in question, on the ground of the *Pharisees' own creed;* making the very ground on which they objected, that of his justification. The Pharisees were, at that time, the most rigid predestinarians in the world, and believed (as a matter of course) in the doctrine of unconditional election and reprobation; and believed, also, (as all do who credit that doctrine,) that *they* were the elect, because they were the descendants of Abraham, whoever might be reprobates. Our Lord, therefore, replied in substance, 'if your doctrine be true, that the descendants of Abraham are to be saved, then it is my duty, as the Messiah or Saviour to come to this house, for so much as he, *also*, is a son of Abraham.' But, if you object, that he has forfeited all relationship to Abraham, by accepting an office under the government under which he was born, and that he in consequence thereof, is lost to all good, then I ought, even on this principle to visit this house, 'for the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost; it is my business in the world, to save *lost* sinners.'

In this discourse our Lord not only justified his going to the house of Zaccheus, but he used the incident (as he was wont to do on all similar occasions,) to illustrate the doctrines of his kingdom, and to declare the nature and design of his mission to this world. To understand which, more clearly, we shall,

I. *Inquire what is implied in the word* LOST, *as used in the text.* This word, in connection with an emphatic *the*, has been frequently used in modern theology in reference to that class of human beings, who are imagined to have been unconditionally and eternally reprobated to irrecoverable ruin, and are, therefore, called '*the lost.*' But nothing can be more certain in the word of truth, than that, IF there is, or ever was, such a race of beings, Christ came purposely to *seek* and to *save* them; because he came to seek and to save, that which was *lost.*

But the word in the text, (whatever it may mean elsewhere) is evidently used in reference to the condition of mankind *after* the fall, and *prior* to this redemption by 'the seed of the woman.' And is undoubtedly designed to show the depth and extent of the depravity of human nature as found in Adam and his posterity, (as represented in him) in consequence of the fall. And as this is a subject of some speculation among theologians at this time, it may not be amiss to inquire a little into its nature and extent.

Depravity in its most simple definition, means *corruption* or *degeneracy.* This is the *nature* of it. In its *extent*, it effects both the

mental, moral, and physicial powers of our nature. It effected the *body*, so as to subject it to a variety of diseases, which tend to its dissolution and decomposition ;—it effected the *intellect*, so as to reduce man from a degree of knowledge which rendered him capable of communion and fellowship with God and Angels, and of naming the whole brute creation according to their nature, to the most perfect state of ignorance and stupidity :—and it reduced the *moral* powers from that state of rectitude, which bore the image of their Divine Author, to such a state of pollution and weakness, as to be not only unfit for heaven, but utterly incapable of recovering the lost favor of God.

Whether this depravity is *total* or not ; that is, whether man became so corrupted or degenerated by the fall as to lose *all* power or ability to serve God, and gain heaven, is a question, one would think, need not occupy a moment to determine, by those who believe the Bible. For no language can possibly be stronger, than that used in Scripture, to express the depth to which man fell by his transgression. He is said to have fallen into a 'pit wherein is no water,' or grace ; (Zacariah ix. 11.) and by this fall 'the *whole head* became sick, and the *whole heart* faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head *there is no soundness* in it ; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores : they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither molified with ointment,' (Isa. i. 5—6.) Now, though these passages were applied to the Israelites in their degeneracy, yet, it is understood that they express the situation of man in the fall, and were applied to the Israelites at the time, on account of their deep apostacy ; and certainly, if such language would apply to man, while he 'has an advocate with the Father,' it would apply to him with infinitely greater force, before such 'advocate,' was provided. And this view of the subject is amply sustained by the Apostle, who says that 'when we were yet *without strength*, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.' (Rom. v. 6.) And with this, accords the language of our Divine Master, who says 'without me ye can do nothing,' towards your salvation. And certainly in view of this gloomy portrait of our fallen race, man might with the utmost propriety be said, to be *lost*, and totally and irrecoverably so, as to himself, without a Saviour.

But some difficulty attends this doctrine of total depravity, on account of its being erroneously applied, as to time and place. Some having applied it to man in his *present* situation, notwithstanding he enjoys the benefit of redemption, having been 'bought with a price,'—the prison doors set open before him, and having 'the grace of God which bringeth salvation,' appear to aid him in fleeing to a place of safety. And considering the sin of Adam, or the mere depravity of our natures sufficient cause for the

damnation of the human family, they view (in their imaginations) the Almighty, in the character of an arbitrary Sovereign, selecting a part of mankind whom he designs to save, whether or no, and leaving the rest to perish without the possibility of mercy. The grounds of this partiality in the Deity, is said to be the *total depravity* of man. Alledging, that as mankind are totally depraved, they were all exposed to eternal ruin; but, if God saw fit, by an arbitrary exercise of what is improperly called *Sovereign grace*, to elect and save *a part* of them, he did no injustice to those, whom he left where he found them, or rather where his previous decree had placed them. Thus the doctrine of total depravity has been made the premises from which the doctrine of unconditional election and reprobation is drawn: to avoid which, others without inquiring, whether such conclusions are justly deducible from the premises or not, and knowing that the Scriptures everywhere represent the Father of mercies, as 'willing the salvation of all men,' have denied the premises in order to avoid the odious conclusion; and have asserted in turn, that man did not *totally* fall, and therefore, had some strength left, by which he can regain the peace and favor of God.

But denying the total depravity of human nature, lays the foundation for another, and (if possible) more dangerous error. The argument stands thus. If man is but partially fallen or depraved, then he must have *some strength* left, by which he can regain his lost ground: and if he can, by any power left in him after his fall, regain his lost ground, then there was no necessity for a Redeemer to save him, and certainly not for a *divine* one. And if there was no *necessity* for a Redeemer, it would have been a work of supererogation in God to have provided one. And as the God of wisdom cannot justly be charged with such superlative folly, it follows that as man had no need of a Saviour, none was provided, and of course Jesus Christ could not have been a Redeemer, and much less a divine one!

But on the other hand, if man did fall entirely, and, in consequence thereof, became totally depraved, which is certainly implied in being 'full of wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores,'—being 'wholly sick,' and 'wholly faint,' and being *without strength*,' and without power to do the will of God; then man most assuredly was in *need* of a Saviour. And as man after the fall was utterly helpless, whatever power redeemed and saved him, must be equal to re-creating him, which none but divine power could do. And as we have seen, that in the fitness of things God *will not* or *cannot* do, what *is not* necessary, we must suppose upon the same principle, that *he will* do what is necessary. And as it is evident, that a Divine Redeemer was imperiously necessary to effect the salvation of a ruined world, we must suppose, that the Father of Mercies, who contem-

plated a display of the most exalted benevolence towards our race, provided such a Saviour as was needed, and, of course, the Saviour provided must be divine. And, indeed, if there was no other argument in favor of the divinity of Christ, than the necessity of his being so, to accomplish the work he undertook, it would be sufficient to establish the point beyond all successful controversy.

But the great difficulties attending the doctrines of total depravity arises, first, from giving it a wrong period in the history of man, and, secondly, in attaching to it a character it does not claim. The only time in which man could be properly considered totally destitute of power to do good, was during the interim between the fall and the promise of a Saviour, in 'the seed of the woman.' During that space, however long or short it may have been, man *was* lost. He was fallen into crime, and therefore exposed to punishment;—he was so 'bruised' by the fall that he was filled with 'putrifaction,' and to climax his misery he was 'without strength,' and of course helpless, and must have remained so, had he not received help from one who 'is mighty to save.' The text does not say that man *is now* lost. It says 'the Son of Man *is* come to seek and to save that which *was* lost.' That is, he *is now come* to accomplish what he bound himself by covenant to do, (Zach. ix. 11.) about four thousand years before, in order to save a race of beings who *were then lost.* But the moment the covenant of redemption was accepted and ratified in heaven, that moment fallen man's relation to his Maker was changed for the better. Instead of being a guilty wretch awaiting the fierce wrath of his offended Maker, he stood 'justified by the righteousness of Jesus Christ;' his 'putrifying wounds,' were 'mollified with ointment,'—his 'sick head,' and 'fainting heart,' received 'a manifestation of the spirit to profit withal,' and he was restored to probationary ground, with the 'prison doors open' before him, and 'the grace of God, which bringeth salvation,' extended to aid him in the course of duty, which lay before him. This being man's *present* situation, as a redeemed sinner, it is certainly improper to consider him *now*, as totally depraved, or destitute of a disposition, and power to do good, at least, till his day of grace expires. And as to the *character* of our present depravity, it does not involve guilt on our part, for which our race deserves to be damned; because it is something entailed on us without our knowledge or consent, and any act or state of being, which can in justice be punished, must depend on the volition of the subject of punishment. But our nature's became depraved without our personal volition, and, therefore, we cannot be justly punished therefor. And, of course, the idea that all men are liable to perish because our nature's are depraved, exists only in the heads of mistaken men. But more of this in the sequel.

There is another ground on which the doctrine of total depravity has been denied. It being undeniable that the scriptures offer life to every one, and that man, in his present situation, has ample power to obey the divine commands, those who still adhere to the doctrine of unconditional reprobation but wish to keep its odious features out of sight, admit the truth of the position, but attribute the power by which the reprobate can serve God and obtain life to *nature*, and call it a *natural ability*. Now the idea of a natural ability, if it means anything, must be the ability *which a man has by nature*. Well, when man was first created, his nature being pure, having the image and likeness of God, he of course had, by the nature in which he was created, power sufficient to obey the precepts of his Maker. But if man by the fall, *totally* lost that power, he certainly does not *now* possess it. Yet, it is evident to the common sense of every man, that he has power to serve God, but to attribute this to grace, (where it belongs) would be to say that every man *might* be saved, to avoid which, the power is attributed to nature. Well, if man *now* possess natural powers to serve God, he must have retained them in the fall, or they must have been restored to him since he fell. But anything *restored*, in this case, must be of *grace*, as it could have been restored only through the mediation of Christ, which renders it a *gracious* ability. But this not being admitted, and the powers which man possesses being attributed to nature, he must have retained them in the fall, and of course he could have but partially fallen. And to be consistent, when the total fall or depravity of man is denied, there being no need of a divine redeemer, if any redeemer at all, the divinity of Christ is denied. Perhaps this view of the subject, will account for the turning of so many advocates of *natural ability*, into UNITARIANS.

But all these difficulties and dangerous errors would be avoided by admitting the total fall and consequent total depravity of man, as the Scriptures evidently set forth; that this state called for, and received from the fountain of goodness, a divine redeemer; and that this depravity, in consequence of the interposition of our divine redeemer, continued *total*, only during the interim between the fall and the promise; man being then so far restored as to be placed on salvable ground. With this view of the subject we can better understand and reconcile those Scriptures which speak of man's deep depravity, with those which speak of his powers, and it attributes our salvation to *grace* instead of *nature;* and, also, properly portrays the glory of the Redeemer in saving a world which *was* irrecoverably *lost*, and which would have remained so, except for his interposition. This leads us to notice

II. *The character of the Saviour provided for this lost world.* He is called in the text 'the son of man,' from which some have conclud-

ded that he was *only* man. But it should not be forgotton that in this Son of Man 'dwelt the fulness of the godhead bodily,' for 'God *was* manifest in the flesh,' and he 'being in the form of God' and thus connected with the divine nature 'thought it not robbery to be equal with God.' (Col. ii. 9;—1 Tim. iii. 16;—Phil. ii. 6.)

But the very nature of his office and mission, that of *Saviour*, proves him to be superior to a *creature*, though of the highest order of intelligences. We have already seen the depth to which man had fallen, and the impossibility of his saving himself, and that no power short of that which first made him, could possibly remake him; and of course the Saviour provided for him, if competent to the design of his office, must be God as well as man. And to this, the common sense of every reflecting mind must cordially agree, and his feelings must revolt at the idea of trusting in any being short of God, to save him. If we fix our eye upon the greatest man who ever graced the earth, either for science as a philosopher, for wisdom and eloquence as a statesman, or for prowess as a military chieftain, we shudder at the thought of trusting in him for the salvation of our souls. No intelligent reflecting mind could be persuaded to do so. And who could trust in Christ to save him, if he were *only* man? If we turn our thoughts to the highest order of created intelligencies, and survey the highest graded archangel in glory, we feel the same reluctance to trust in him to save us. For when Gabriel was commissioned to comfort Daniel, (chap. 10.) the devil, called 'the prince of the kingdom of Persia, withstood him one and twenty days' till Michael came to his assistance.

And when this same 'Michael contended with the devil about the body of Moses,' (Jude. 9.) 'he durst not bring a railing accusation against him,' but prayed for God to 'rebuke him' which is no more than we can do. But if Gabriel and Michael, the two highest angels in heaven, could not by their own personal powers resist the onsets of the devil upon themselves, who would trust them to save *their souls*? But if it be objected that an angel will bind the devil during the millennium, we answer that he who will bind him is 'the angel who redeemed us,' for whose divinity we are contending.

Thus the common sense of man corroborates the declaration of holy writ, as well as the argument drawn from the necessity of the case, to prove the divinity of our blessed Saviour. And I must confess, with all the charity I am capable of mustering, I cannot see how a person can have saving faith; that is, exercise a saving confidence in the willingness and *ability* of Jesus Christ to save him, unless he believe in his essential divinity. I will not say but that some few individuals who have doubted on this subject, *may* have obtained the forgiveness of sins, but if they have, it is morally certain that their

hearts were better than their *heads*, and that in a moment of happy inconsistency with themselves, they have exercised a confidence in Christ, infinitely above what their erroneous sentiment would justly authorise.

III. We are in the next and last place, to inquire into the nature and extent of the salvation provided by this divine Redeemer.

This salvation is of a two fold kind; 1. universal and unconditional; and 2. conditional and limited. The first kind applies to the moral guilt of the *original offence of man*, and the second to our *personal* sins. The Apostle says when speaking of Christ, 'he is the Saviour of *all men*, especially of *those that believe*.' (1. Tim. iv. 10.) That is he saves *all men* from the guilt of Adam's first offence, and this being done before *we* had an *actual* existence it was impossible, and of course not required of *us* to observe a condition. And as Adam was utterly helpless after he fell, till he was restored to salvable ground, *he* could not have observed any condition in obtaining pardon for his *first* offence. But in our personal sins, or sins we commit in person, we are personally active, and nothing can be more reasonable than that we should be personally active in obtaining a pardon. But as no personal actions of ours can be meritorious in this case, our acts must be confined to the use of means.

This universal salvation from the guilt of the original offence of man, is announced by the Apostle, (Rom. v. 18.) in these words, 'Therefore, as by the offence of one, judgment came upon *all* men to condemnation; *even so* by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon *all* men unto justification of life.' If all were condemned in Adam, they were all justified in him also; for he was identically the same person when he was justified, that he was when condemned, and he represented his posterity in just as full a sense when he was pardoned as when he fell. It is upon this ground that we plead against the doctrine that men are universally liable to be damned for Adam's sin; and it is on this ground also, that we plead for the initial salvation of all men, and the final salvation of those who die in *infancy*. To illustrate this point, we will refer to the case of a young man who, in the late war, was condemned to be shot for being found asleep on his post as a sentinel. But being pardoned by the clemency of the general, he afterwards married and raised a family. Now when he was condemned to die, his unborn posterity were condemned also,—not to *die*, for they were not *alive*, but to remain where they were, that is, in a state of non-existence. But when he was pardoned, his posterity were pardoned in him, in the same seminal sense in which they were condemned in him. As in his condemnation to death his unborn posterity were condemned to remain unborn, so by his being pardoned they were permitted to be born: but who would *now* think of arraigning and shooting his children for an of-

fence for which he was pardoned before they were or could be born.' We have read and heard of children suffering with the parent, who were born *before* the offence, and participated therein, but the veriest tyrant that ever lived in the most barbarous land upon earth, was never known to put children to death for a crime for which he had pardoned their father *before* they were born.

So it was with Adam; had the sentence of death which was passed upon him, been executed on the day in which he sinned, nothing can be more certain than that his posterity would have remained unborn: but in consequence of his being pardoned, he was permitted to propagate his species upon the earth. But how persons, actuated by the benevolence and kindly feelings which the gospel inspires, could ever imagine that a holy, just and merciful God should consign the posterity of Adam or any part of them, to the eternal burnings of an irrecoverable hell, for a crime for which he pardoned him before his posterity had or could have been born, is the *ninth* wonder of the world!! Indeed, such views are contrary to the express declaration of God's holy word, for he says (Eze. xviii. 20.) 'The son *shall not bear* the iniquity of the father.'

As Adam was pardoned and permitted to 'multiply and replenish the earth' in virtue of the atonement of Christ, it follows that if any part of his posterity, which might have existed in the eye of Omniscience, were not designed to have been benefited by the atonement, that part could never have been born; because it was only in consequence of this interposition that any part were born. But so far from the human family's being diminished, in this respect, from what was originally contemplated in the organization of man, we find, that since the redemption, it has been greatly increased in number. For when God called Eve to an account for her sin in the garden, he said 'I will greatly multiply thy conception.' If, therefore, there ever was such a being in the eye of Omniscience, as is called a reprobate, or one for whom Christ did not die, that being could not have been born. But so far from this being the case, or the family of Adam being diminished thereby, we find that the constitution of things was so changed that it was greatly increased.

But why this great multiplication of our species? Probably the reason was this. The world, it seems, was made as a place of probation for intelligent man, and was to continue as such, a certain length of time, probably about *seven thousand* years; and as men were designed to live till the end of the world, (for all that we can discover to the contrary,) before their probationary state ended, it is probable that in the first organization of man, provision was made for multiplying just part enough to fill the world by the time its duration would terminate. But in consequence of leaving man subject to the ravages of death, the world could not have been peopled be-

fore its termination. The probable object, therefore, of thus 'greatly multiplying' the conception of the woman, was to supply the ravages which death was about to make in the family of man.

But if God pardoned Adam for his first offence, why was he not freed from the consequences of the crime, and restored to his pristine immortality, and not left subject to disease and death? The most probable reason may be found in the following consideration. In all good governments, when the work for which an office was established, is fully accomplished, the office, being no longer needed, is abolished, and of course the holder of it, goes out of office. So if the work of mediation had been accomplished at the restoration of man to his probationary state, the office of mediator would have been done away, and man would have been left without 'an advocate with the Father;' but by leaving man subject to death and its attendant evils, the work of redemption is not, and will not be accomplished, until man is restored to the state of immortality in which he was created, which will not be the case till the resurrection of the body. The Apostle says (1 Cor. xv, 25, 26.) 'For he' (the Mediator) 'must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death;' which will be accomplished by raising the dead. And when this is done, then cometh the end 'of his Mediatorial reign,' and he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father, 'who shall be all in all.' That is, the godhead shall then reign in the person of the Father, as he now does in the person of the Son. But until the resurrection of the dead, the mediatorial office will be continued, and of course being left subject to disease and death, continues to us all the advantages of having 'an advocate with the Father.'

To see the force of this truth, we must notice that *before* the fall, man was required to keep the commands of God by his *own natural powers*, or the powers he derived from his creation; but since our redemption, we are required to do these things by *the grace of God* which we derive through the mediation of Jesus. Before the fall, the least deviation from the perfect law would insure irrecoverable ruin; and had the work of redemption been completed on the day it commenced, and man restored to his pristine immortality, the office of mediation would then have been abolished, as being no longer needed, and we should have been left without a Saviour. And as all Adam's posterity would have been as liable to sin, as was himself at first, and as sin without a Mediator was unpardonable, there would have been great danger, if not a strong probability, that universal damnation would have ensued. But in our present relation to the Saviour, 'if we sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.' (1 John ii, 1.) And as angels and men in their first state of innocence *did sin*, and since by the grace

of God *now* we *can* abstain from sin: it is highly probable, if not morally certain, that more souls will be saved under the present order of things, than would have been, had the work of redemption been completed on the day of its institution.

If it should be objected, that if man had been restored to the Adamic state, and any of his posterity had sinned, a Saviour might have been provided as readily as for Adam; we reply that Adam was redeemed not merely in his *individual* capacity, but as the representative of a *race* of beings. For 'God so loved the *world*' (not merely one man, but the whole race,) 'that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.' (John iii. 16.) It, therefore, is only because he is a *representative*, that a sinner could be provided for in this case; and if Adam's posterity had multiplied to a thousand before they sinned, and then all sinned and each representing his own unborn posterity, it would have required a thousand Saviours to have redeemed them all: which would have been impossible inasmuch as there is but *one* God to become incarnate. The only way, therefore, that we can conceive how the human race could be redeemed, is, in our first federal head and representative. And, in view of the advantages we derive from being thus redeemed, we say with Wesley, that we are better off *now*, *by grace*, than we were *by nature* before the fall. But this advantage is not derived from man's having sinned, but from the grace of God. For 'where *sin* abounded, *grace* did *much more* abound.' (Rom. v. 20.)

Though the depravity of our natures may 'incline us to evil, and that continually,' yet we are under no necessity of yielding to it; for 'the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men.' (Titus ii. 11.) And we have a sure word of promise that 'God will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able; but will, with the temptation, also make a way to escape, that we may be able to bear it.' (1. Cor. x. 13.) So that the grace of God, in such portion as shall be necessary to counteract the natural tendency of our fallen natures to evil, is evidently given to every man. We are, therefore, subject to no disadvantage, ultimately for being left in this state, for if we have weakness on one hand we have ample strength supplied on the other. And in view of all that God has done for man, we say, if we sin against God now, we shall be as justly condemnable, if not more so, as if we had never fallen.

Again; though we are subject to the afflictions and infirmities incident to a state of mortality; yet, such is the goodness of God that he has not only promised grace to overcome them, but has promised a reward to those who with patience and long suffering endure them. For 'all things work together for good to them that love God.' And 'our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a

far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.' So far then from man's being the loser, by being left in this state of affliction and trial, he may, by grace, be infinitely the gainer.

It is to this view of the economy of salvation, as I think, the Apostle alludes when he says 'the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope.' (Rom. viii, 20.) Now the creature in this place must certainly mean *man*, because it is expressly said that 'he waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God,' to which the brutal world can never aspire. And the 'vanity' alluded to, must be the state of mortality to which we are subject, because he 'waiteth for the *redemption of the body;*' which when effected will 'deliver from the *bondage of corruption.*' Man did 'not willingly' remain in this situation, but it was thought best by '*Him*' who sees farther than man can see, and who, seeing the advantages man would derive from having a mediator constantly officiating in his behalf, 'subjected the same in hope,' or in the prospect of saving more of the human family in this, than in any other way.

But the question may be asked, if we are not guilty, now on account of what Adam did, why do we suffer the consequences of that sin? We admit that we *were* guilty in him when he was under the curse of guilt, in the same sense in which we existed in him at the time, that is, seminally, but in no other sense. And that seminal existence being nothing more than an unconscious state, or state of non-existence, the guilt we then lay under could subject us to no other punishment than to remain in the same situation. Nor could we have been saved therefrom, unless the guilt which bound us there was removed. Because the guilt we lay under arose not from *our* act, nor from *our* participation in *his* act, but simply from our being seminally in him when *he* was guilty. And had the punishment due to his crime been inflicted, (which would have been done, but for the interposition of Christ,) he would have died on the day of his fall, in which case we could never have derived our existence from him as the germ of the human family. But his life being spared and he being permitted to propagate his species, is proof that his guilt was removed, and if *his* guilt was removed, our's was also, for our's consisted only in his. And, in further proof thereof, we assert, without fear of successful contradiction, that no man, let him be ever so penitent for *his own sins*, was ever known to feel the least degree of contrition for the sin of Adam. He may mourn like David that he was 'conceived in' a sinful nature, but the lamentation was more on account of his *yielding* to its corruption, than merely his being 'shapen in iniquity.'

But why then do we suffer the *effects* of that sin? To explain this, it is necessary to observe, that there are *three kinds of evil* in the

world: *moral*, *penal*, and *natural*. Moral evil is a transgression of moral law, either by neglecting its precepts or violating its restraints. Penal evil is the penalty or punishment inflicted on those who are guilty of moral evil. This is the kind of evil which the Lord creates. Such was the sword, the pestilence and the famine; in reference to which the prophet asks 'is there evil in the city and the Lord has not done it?' But natural evils is that which follows in a regular course of nature, or from the established laws of nature. Now Adam was guilty of *moral evil*, when he took the forbidden fruit; he suffered a *penal evil*, when he felt in part the punishment of his crime; and his posterity suffer a *natural evil*, when they derive from him, in the course of nature, their present fallen and diseased natures. It is an established law of nature, that no stream can rise higher than its fountain; and as Adam the fountain from which we derive our earthly existence, 'was made (or left) subject to vanity,' it was impossible for him to give his posterity a better nature than he himself possessed. Nor is this a singular case, for the drunkard and the debauchee, though their crimes may be pardoned, not unfrequently are brought to a premature grave, and entail a sickly constitution on their descendants, as the consequence of their sins.

One thing more; if man is restored to a state of immortality by the resurrection of the dead, will he not thereby be restored to the peace and favor of God, and, consequently, be saved at last? Nay; 'the restitution' of man to a state of immortality, and the earth from the curse under which it labors for man's sake, will not do away the sins of the wicked. For our Lord informs us that the dead shall come forth, 'they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, *unto the resurrection of damnation*.' (John v. 29.) Immortality and happiness are not synonymous terms. The devil is immortal, but not happy.

But does not the depravity of human nature, which tends to evil as naturally as 'the sparks fly upward,' disqualify man for heaven? Certainly; an unholy nature is not, and cannot, in the nature and fitness of things, be suitable for a holy heaven; and, therefore, if we never commit *crime*, so as to be *punishable*, yet our natures must be purified by 'the blood of Jesus' before we are qualified for a state of happiness in a holy heaven. But as the application of this blood to adults must be by faith, the *neglect* of which constitutes the sin of omission, what becomes of infants and idiots who are incapable of believing? We answer, 1. They cannot be *punishable*, because impartial justice cannot *punish* only for that which *might and ought* to have been *avoided*. But the infant and idiot could no more avoid being born with impure natures than we can avoid being born with white, red, or black skins, and, of course, are no more punishable for the one, than we are for the other. But, 2. they are not to

be left suspended between heaven and hell because our Lord assures us, 'of such is the kingdom of heaven.' God does not require impossibilities of his creatures, but it is impossible for infants or idiots to exercise faith, and, therefore, it is not required; but as Jesus, by the grace of God, 'tasted death for every man,' so the same goodness that 'numbers the hairs of our heads' and marks 'the sparrows that fall,' and 'so loved the world' as to provide for it a Redeemer, will apply the merits of his blood to those who die in infancy and idiocy, without the conditions required of others.

The second kind of salvation provided by the Redeemer, is that which extends to actual sins, and is conditional and limited. It is *conditional*, because it is suspended upon conditions; such as 'repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ.' And it is *limited*, not to names, families nor numbers, but to the character who complies with the conditions. These conditions may be observed by every one, for '*whosoever* believeth in him' (Christ) 'shall not perish, but have everlasting life;' so that if all men would believe and obey the word of truth, all men would be saved from their *personal* sins. It follows, therefore, that salvation from personal sins is not limited by the decree of God, but by the sinner himself, who does it by neglecting or refusing to comply with the conditions on which it is suspended. This item of our subject opens to our view a large and interesting field, but it would be contrary to our present purpose to pursue it further at this time.

In reviewing the subject, we are led to contemplate one of the most degrading scenes of human folly that ever disgraced our world, and one of the most stupendous acts of divine benevolence in close connexion, and in bold relief. We see a race of beings whom the combined wisdom and goodness of God had placed in the most happy paradise, impiously violating the divine commands, and plunging themselves into an abyss of misery unmeasurable in its depths, and indescribable in its horrors. We see the unhappy culprits called forth from the shade of the trees which were created for their happiness,—clad with fig-leaves—covered with shame—loaded with guilt—trembling with fear, and sinking into interminable despair. And we see the sword of incensed justice—burning with wrath—raised with power, and on the eve of thrusting the sinner down to his deserved hell. At this critical moment we see the second person in the adorable Trinity, 'the fairest among ten thousand and one altogether lovely,' interposing in his behalf!! O what goodness! O what benevolence!! O! what a debt of everlasting gratitude do we owe our Maker and Redeemer; and with what additional curses shall we sink to an interminable hell, if we slight or neglect the offered salvation. But to what high notes of praise, and unsullied scenes of glory, shall we be raised, if obedient and faithful, when we are made 'joint heirs with the blessed Jesus.'—AMEN.

POETRY.

RETURN—once more return,
Oh wanderer, to thy God,
A voice yet on thee calls,
A finger points the road;
Why wilt thou, sinful, still
The proffer'd boon disdain?
Did not Christ come to save,
Yet bleed, yet die in vain?

Return—trust not to youth,
To strength, health, wealth, renown;
Thine eye-lids may be shut,
Ere even this day goes down;
Where'er thy steps are bent,
Death hovers by thy side,
Thou know'st not what
May to thy fate betide!

Behold the mighty sun;
He metes out day by day;
Each new moon's circlet saith,
'A month hath passed away;'
Preach not unto thy heart
The seasons, as they roll,
'Nearer and nearer draws
To judgment seat thy soul!'

'Return!' the promise saith,
'Hark! wayward wanderer, ho!
Thy sins, as scarlet red;
Shall white be made, as snow!
Trust in the Saviour, trust,
Against sin's torrent strive;
Thy faith shall make thee whole;
The soul that hears shall live!

'Before the Lord cast down
The burden of thy sin,
The old man and his deeds,
And a new life 'begin;
So walking in the light;
By revelation given,
Through darkness and through death,
Thy path shall lead to heaven!

THE WATERS OF LIFE.

BY J. W. LIGHT.

Leave! O leave, the rivers of earth,
Where poisonous waters flow;
And cease to drink, ere the blighting dearth
Shall come, with its voice of wo!

And list ye not, as her fountains gush,
And their music pour around;
For a serpent dwells 'neath the golden flush,
And would lure thee by the sound!

But come! O come, to the crystal stream
That flows from the holy hill,
Where a purer light than the sun's doth gleam
On its waters, clear and still!

Come! O come!—and the burning flame
Of passion will cease to rage;
And a cooling spirit steal o'er thy frame,
And thy strongest grief assuage!

The mind's rich soil will never bear
Its amaranthine flowers,
Till a holier sky be glowing there
To send down holier showers.

Then leave! O leave, the rivers of earth,
Where poisonous waters flow;
And cease to drink, ere the blighting dearth
Shall come, with its voice of wo!

SERMON XIII.

Delivered at Hinde Street Chapel, London, on Sunday evening, July 1, 1832.*

BY REV. ROBERT NEWTON
PRESIDENT OF THE WESLEYAN CONFERENCE, ENGLAND.

For what is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? Matt. xvi. 26.

THIS is, indeed, my friends, one of the most grave, and at the same time one of the most interesting questions that ever was proposed. Well and truly has an eminent divine designated this question, by way of eminence, in a discourse which he has published on the text—'The important question.' The question relates, not to profit and loss in any ordinary or trivial concerns, which will not and cannot materially affect us, which ever way the scale may happen to turn; the inquiry regards the loss or the gain, the perdition or the salvation, of a man's own soul. And can any thing in the universe of God be of equal importance to man with the salvation of his own soul? Nor is this question, my friends, of partial interest. It is not addressed particularly or exclusively to any given number of our species; it concerns each and all, learned and unlettered, male and female; for, as every human being has a soul, it must either be saved or lost.

The Great Teacher, who spake as never man spake, and knew how forcible are right words, proposes the sentiment of true wisdom which the text contains, by way of inquiry; as though, by this circumstance, he would indirectly teach us, that no man, with a rightly constituted mind, can for a moment question or doubt a statement so self-evident. He employs the interrogatory form of speech, doubtless, that the appeal, which is made to every man's reason and conscience, as in the sight of God, might be the more forcible and conclusive.

* This Sermon was reported by a stenographer, and originally published in the Wesleyan Preacher.

Surely, if the sons of ambition would but seriously reflect on this question, they would find themselves very powerfully arrested in their pursuit of this world's honor; and if the giddy and the gay would but allow themselves to ponder this great question, they would find themselves checked in their eager attempts after this world's pleasure; and were the man of business, who has set his heart on the acquisition of substance and wealth, or could the miser, whose name is by interpretation miserable, but allow himself to consider this question, they would pause and ask themselves, Am I then, after all, making a good bargain? 'For what is a man profited, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?'

It is, however, true, that persons may professedly admit the truth and wisdom and propriety of any given maxim or sentiment, and yet it is a thing widely different from this to act habitually under its influence—in other words, a proposition may be theoretically admitted when it is practically denied; and, if we do not most egregiously mistake, this is precisely the case with multitudes around us from day to day, who admit the wisdom and the truth of the maxim of the text—who know the subject carries conviction on the very face of it, but yet, how are they acting? Why, they are living from day to day either as if they thought, after all, that they had no souls to be saved or lost, or as though there were some sort of impression that it would turn out in the sequel that the world would be more valuable than their soul, and, therefore, they are bartering their souls for the world.

Some who hear me know very well, that at the time the text was proposed, commerce was not carried on or conducted, as in these days, through any circulating medium like money, but in the way of bartering—simply exchanging one thing for another—disposing of one thing for another. Now, if this be the reference, then, what our Saviour would teach us is this—that the soul of man is of a nature so excellent, and of a value so great, that there is nothing in this world that can be proposed and accepted as an equivalent—that the world itself, the whole of it, is not an equivalent, and that the man who would exchange his soul even for a world would be a loser—that every item in the account would ultimately be put down on the side of loss—loss, all loss—a loss ruinous and fatal.

The maxim of the text may be illustrated by the following propositions: Man is a being of worth—he has a soul—that soul is of unspeakable value; invaluable as is the soul of man, there is an awful possibility that it may be lost; for such a loss the acquisition of a world is no compensation.

We say, then, that man is a being of worth. And, indeed, the superiority, the dignity of man is very strikingly indicated by the

form and structure of his body. The different orders of animals with which he is surrounded on the face of this earth, are grovelling; they are prone to the earth, from which they derived their existence, and to which they tend; but how differently formed is man! Man is distinguished with an erect form—man is ennobled with a majestic countenance, which our poet has, not without reason, beautifully designated—

'The human face divine!'

A countenance to look above this world and all it contains. Moreover, man is gifted with the power of articulate speech. Yet it is not to the body, though, in regard to that, every man may say, 'I am fearfully and wonderfully made,'—it is not, I say, to the body that man is indebted for his dignity, importance, and worth; for the body, after all, has appetites in common with animal nature, and tends to the dust out of which it was formed and to which it must return. We say, then, that the soul is the man; the body is but the clay tenement, the soul is the deathless inhabitant—the body is but the material casket, the soul is the precious sparkling jewel that is contained within—the body is intimately allied to the earth, the soul claims kindred with heaven!

I argue the excellence, and consequently the worth, of the human soul, from *the spirituality of its nature*. To attempt a definition of the soul, of its essence, is not the province of the Christian preacher. This he most willingly leaves to the mere metaphysician, who may amuse himself and others as long as he pleases with definitions of that sort. Certainly, whatever the soul be, it is not material—it does not consist of any modification, form, or arrangement of air, earth, fire, or water; for, although the soul can act through the bodily material organs, yet it is, in its own nature, quite distinct and independent, for this plain, obvious reason—the soul is essentially a thinking being—it has the power of rational thought. Rational thought is not the property of matter: make as many experiments as you please—and try into how many forms and arrangements matter may be put, and into how many is it capable of being thrown,—and yet, after all these modifications and transformations, you will find that mere matter is senseless, thoughtless matter still: whereas the soul thinks, and must therefore be something distinct from matter, as thought is not a property of matter.

The same thing is very strongly implied in the rapidity of the movements of mind. Matter is sluggish and inert. Light travels very rapidly compared with other things: but at what a very tardy rate does light travel compared with thought! Does not this shew that there is an essential difference between matter and mind? The same thing may justly be inferred from the power of abstraction of which the soul is capable; for, though the soul acts through the me-

dium of bodily organs, yet, when it chooses, it can abstract itself and act independently of these organs. Moreover, some tell us, and we give them credit, that the soul performs operations while all the external senses are dormant; and, in some cases, there are such distinct characters and traces left, if I may so speak, on the leaves of memory, that persons can actually read all these operations in their waking moments. And what do the phenomena of dreaming prove, but that the soul can and does act independently of the organs of the body? Then certainly, the same thing is proved by the Mosaic account of the creation of the soul. The body was formed out of the dust of the ground, and 'the Lord God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became'—what? what he was not before—'a living soul.' The soul is a spark, not of earthly or material flame—the soul sprang forth from God, and God is, therefore designated in this book, 'The Father of spirits;' then, in this book it is also written, and that is authority to which we reverently bow, 'There is a spirit in man, and the Spirit of the Almighty gave him understanding.'

Is the soul of man of a nature so excellent? Is the soul of man spiritual, immaterial? Why, then, how does such an exalted nature rise in excellence, dignity and worth, above all the modifications of this world's gross and senseless materials?

I argue, secondly, the excellence, and consequently the worth, of the human soul, from *its lofty capacities, from its vast powers and unrivalled attributes.* What a wondrous creature is the soul of man? It possesses powers of large discourse, capable of looking before and after—powers intellectual and sentient—powers instinctive and excogitative—powers of understanding to know, of will to determine, of sensibility to feel, of memory to retain, and of conscience, too, to decide on its own operations. To the soul of man seems to belong the principle of interminable progression. Who shall say to what an extent it may travel? who shall say what are its high capabilities of knowledge and enjoyment? Its wondrous powers may be seen in the invention and progress of the arts and sciences; and yet I am one of those who are disposed to think that both are yet in their infancy; and, notwithstanding all that has been done by men of genius and acquirement, there may rise up others of powers more extensive and stupendous, and genius more bright, to make fresh discoveries, and to improve upon the discoveries of those that have preceded them, beyond any thing that we can conceive. Of what is not the soul of man capable? It can extend its survey over the whole circuit of creation—it can ransack all nature and analyze its properties and ascertain its powers! What cannot the soul of man do? It can travel through illimitable space—it can circumnavigate the globe. It can do more. The soul of man can mount up to other worlds, and then it can employ its operations and

count their numbers, and ascertain their distances, and calculate their movements. Wondrous being! The soul of man can do more still. The soul of man can mount up from the loftiest works of nature to the God of nature himself! For God was the soul formed—of God is the soul capable—and short of Him no rest can the soul of man find or enjoy! And, although, morally speaking, this soul is not now what it once was—although it is not now the pure and holy Spirit it was when it sprang forth from its great Originator, yet still there is the capacity—still there is something that cannot be satisfied of any thing short of God. It is a matter of conscience to any man, that he is formed for God—that there is something within him capable of knowing, enjoying, and serving Him for ever and ever.

Now, what is there in this world to compare with the soul of man? Is it the 'Regent of day,' as he has been called—the centre of the system—the most glorious of all the visible objects in the universe? But what is the sun even in his meridian splendor? Why, he is unconscious of his own glory—he does not know to how many myriads of human beings he conveys light and heat and blessing. The sun has no power of self-determination—he acts necessarily, according to the laws which the Governor of the universe has imposed. The sun! Why the sun knows nothing—the sun enjoys nothing—the sun in his noon-day splendor is a senseless ball compared with the soul of the meanest slave, possessing, as it does, the high attributes of intelligence, of sensibility and spirituality. Wondrous creature! Oh, what a thing to possess such a soul!

I argue the excellence, and consequently the worth of the human soul, in the third place, from *its duration*. Wondrous as is this being, high as are its capacities, vast as are its powers, if it were destined very soon to be blotted out of existence, and be as it never had been, how would it then dwindle into insignificance! But, now, the soul of man is destined to an unending existence. I think this might be fairly argued from the immateriality of its nature: on the admission of the one, I think the other follows by necessary consequence. For instance, a spiritual nature, you know, cannot be destoyed by any influence of corruption—a spiritual essence cannot be dissolved by decomposition of parts—an immaterial nature cannot be destroyed by external violence. By this argument, then, we must arrive at the conclusion, that the soul must still exist—that it is never to die. The same thing may justly be inferred from the vast powers and capacities of the soul. The only wise God never acts without reason and design, not unworthy of himself; and is it conceivable that he would have made man so wonderful, so stupendous in his capacities and powers, if he had not intended that he should exist longer than threescore years and ten? Would the vessel

have been so richly freighted if he, who was the framer of that vessel and its charterer, had determined it should become a total wreck as soon as she had sailed across the stream—the narrow stream of time? No, my brethren.

Besides, the desire of perpetuity of being, which is a matter of consciousness to all, I believe, is a strong indication of the same truth. During my travels in some parts of this country and in the sister island, I have sometimes, when I had a few moments to spare, taken a pensive walk into the church-yard—and there, upon the humble stone, in rude sculpture, I have seen the names of this man and that woman, and of such a son and daughter, who once, like myself, were instinct with life. And here, I have thought, was an indication of immortality. No man wishes, however humble his situation, to be forgotten—never wishes to be blotted out of being. There is the desire, then, after an endless existence. And do you think that He who framed us would have given us this desire after a thing while that thing itself was altogether deceptive and unreal? And then, we all know, from what we feel in ourselves, that this cannot be the native region of the soul—that in this world its proper element is not to be found—that it does not find here any thing congenial to its nature or equal to its cravings and capacities; it is obviously formed for a good which this world does not contain. But does not this go to presume immortality—a nobler and higher state of things?

Then the conviction of responsibility, which we all have, proves the same thing. Yes, a conviction of responsibility; for I should pause before I credited any infidel that would tell me—'I have got rid of it—such a thing never crosses my mind.' Ah, they may say this in the seasons of wealth and of prosperity, they say very different things to me in the hour of sickness and on the approach of death. They tell me then that they were acting the hypocrite all the time—that they had a conscience all the while—and although they tried to administer opiates by infidelity, and sometimes by sensuality, they still felt that they had a conviction of accountability. And what does that imply? Immortality! But still the unending duration of the soul is not a settlement of the question. The grand question is, 'What saith the scriptures?' Here we are always safe when we confine ourselves to 'What saith the Lord?' There is a Being who only hath immortality, and who has, as we here learn for certain, made the soul of man immortal. Life and immortality are brought clearly and fully to light by the Gospel.

What an overwhelming thought is this! Brethren, do you frequently indulge in it? There is something in you and in me, that in being must always be!—an existence commensurate with eternity, which shall never, never terminate. Awful thought! Yonder

sun shall be quenched in total and final darkness, and yonder moon shall for ever withdraw her shining—and the stars of heaven shall fall from their orbits—the universe shall dissolve with fervent heat, and the works that are therein shall be burnt up ; but the soul shall live when all created nature shall die—the soul shall blaze out in immortality, and shall outlive

'The wreck of matter and the crash of worlds!'

There is another argument which will, perhaps, be called the trite and common argument in the mouth of every one ; but, be that as it may, let all such know that every thing new in Christianity is false. Revealed truth is essentially the same ; and truth is not the less valuable because it is either old or common. Would to God it were more common than it is ! What is the argument, then, my friends ? I argue the worth of the soul from the price which has been paid for its redemption ? I have already intimated, that the soul of man is not now the being it once was. God created man upright and perfect ; but by transgression he fell—the crown tumbled from his head, and his honor lies in the dust—the soul is loaded with guilt and blackened with its crimes ; and man cannot redeem his own soul. The redemption of the soul was too precious for man to effect—the price required was too great, and no created being could redeem it. Our poet of Paradise has, indeed, supposed a case ; and it may pass for poetry, but, depend upon it, it is not theology. He absolutely supposes the Divine Being instituting an inquiry among the angelic orders :—

'Say, heavenly Powers! where shall we find such love?
Which of ye will be mortal to redeem
Man's mortal crime, the just, the unjust to save?
Dwells in all heaven charity so dear?
He asked, but all the heavenly choir stood mute,
And silence was in heaven.'

What, then, did the poet Milton imagine, that if Gabriel had said, 'Lo, here am I, send me ; I am willing, for the sake of man, to assume his nature, to live and suffer and die, "the just, the unjust to save!"'—did the poet imagine that the death of Gabriel in a human body would have effected the redemption of the soul of man ? The thing was impossible. No mere creature could have effected the redemption of the souls of myriads of men. Man was redeemed, but by what ? Let St. Peter tell. We were 'not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold'—no, no ; there had been no proportion between the worth of that to be redeemed and the price, in that case—'not with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot!' A price this, O, how precious ! Who

can conceive the preciousness of the blood of Christ? A price beyond all power of angels and of men to compute!

The argument is this. If the sum paid down was so incalculably great, what, in the estimation of the Divine Being, must have been the worth of the soul which was redeemed by such a price? But, then, that redemption might be carried into practical effect, what a wonderful diversity of means has God instituted! For this he has given us the word of his truth—for this he has sent down the Spirit of his grace—for this he has appointed the holy Sabbath—for this he has appointed the service of the sanctuary—for this he has commissioned his ministers—for this he has given us line upon line and precept upon precept—for this the Spirit strives—for this the ordinances of his grace are dispensed—for this the successive seasons revolve—for this the sun gives his light—for this the willing earth continues her increase—and for this time is continued, and human life is prolonged, and death is delayed; all this that the soul may be saved! Oh, man, Oh, woman, reverence thyself! Thou hast a soul—a soul whose interests are immeasurable, whose worth is incalculable,—reverence thyself! And, secondly, tremble for thyself; for invaluable as is thy soul, it may by possibility be lost! Now, when our Lord speaks of the loss of the soul, he does not speak of the loss of its existence, but the loss of its well-being, the loss of all that for which it would be desirable to have a soul. To be lost is to be cast away—to be lost is to be undone—to be lost is to perish!

Now, there are two great ideas comprehended here; and I shall just name them. The loss of the soul implies the privation of all the good of which a soul is capable in this world and in the next—the loss of pardon, the loss of peace, the loss of holiness, the loss of happiness, and the loss of the beatific vision—the loss of the crown of glory and the palm of victory—the loss of the inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away—the loss of the rivers of pleasure which are at God's right hand: it is to be shut out from happiness and from heaven and from hope. And not only does the loss of the soul imply the loss of all the good, but the endurance of all the evil of which the soul is capable. We cannot tell how much that is. Sin and misery are in close neighborhood—they go hand in hand. Who can tell what some souls endure in this world, in the corrodings of guilt and the lashings of an accusing conscience? May the gracious God forbid that any of us should ever know, by experience, what it is to lose the soul—to be where there is no eye to pity, no cordial to relieve, no ray of hope to cheer, and where justice and self condemning guilt consign the lost soul to eternal perdition! God has said, 'The soul that sinneth, it shall die!' Is not the traveller in danger of losing his life, who, bewildered in

the darkness of midnight, has turned out of the right way into a place of pitfalls? But is not the sinner who has forsaken the royal road of truth and holiness—wandered into the mazes of error and tumbled into the ditches of wickedness, is he not in danger of losing his soul forever?

Where this event takes place there are sad and awful aggravations:—and this is one—it is the man's own deed; 'For what is a man profited *if he* gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?' If the soul be lost, it is not the act of his neighbor or of his minister—it is the man's own act. This will be the terrible scourge of lost souls in perdition. 'I did it—it was my own act—I bartered with my soul!' And remember, this is an incalculable loss. A man may lose property—he may calculate how much; a man may lose friends, he knows how many; but, Oh, if the soul be lost, who can tell the amount of that loss? If the soul perish, it is, once more, an irreparable loss—a loss that cannot be retrieved. A man may lose health, and yet, by the blessing of Providence upon medical aid, he may become more healthy than before; a man may lose property—his all in the world, and yet, by industry and the smile of Providence, he may become richer than before; a man may lose friends—God may raise up others in their room; but, Oh, if the soul is lost, it is lost not for a day, a month, or a year, but for eternity; and it is that word 'eternity' which give emphasis to bliss or woe, to ease or pain, to hell or heaven. It is eternity which makes a hell of hell, and a heaven of heaven!

I think, my friends, by this time you are prepared for the third proposition and for its adoption,—that FOR SUCH A LOSS THE ACQUISITION OF A WORLD WOULD BE NO RECOMPENSE. 'What is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?' You will observe, that our Lord does not mean by this to denounce a due regard to worldly business or the acquisition of property; but still he teaches us that there is danger; because, when riches increase, a man is apt to set his heart upon them. When properly viewed, riches are a great blessing: where this is the case, the rich man is a blessing to all around him, and he blesses others while Providence is blessing him. Again, when our Saviour speaks of a man gaining *the whole world*, he is not to be understood as though that were literally possible. You know there was a man that was called Alexander the Great—he was in many things Alexander the Little, and was a wretched slave to his own unsanctified passions; however, it was said that this man had conquered the whole world: he never saw the whole world. So, here, a man cannot strictly gain the whole world; and the expression means that he has gained every thing of the world that he can possibly enjoy.

Let us, then, suppose a case. Here is a man that has gained all

the honors of the world that he can enjoy—the honor of titles, the honor of victory, the honor of conquest. He has, moreover, the honor of empire, of a sceptre, of a throne, and of a crown; this is the golden termination—he can go no higher; he has wealth sufficiently ample to support his imperial dignity—wealth in abundance; he has, in addition to this, a most vigorous constitution—he has all pleasure at his command, and he lives according to the sight of his eyes day by day; he has all this at the expense of religion and the loss of his soul—and where is the profit? He has had the honors that are empty and transitory—a feeble taper that death will soon put out with his extinguisher, and he has had them at the expense of the honor that cometh from God. He has had sensual pleasure, as much of it as he can enjoy; but then it degrades, it leaves behind it the sting and the poison and the pain; and he has had this at the expense of the pure, satisfying, and permanent pleasure which religion inspires, and which springs from the well of life. Where is the profit? He has had the world's wealth at the expense of true riches—the riches of wisdom, of holiness, of reconciliation and joy, the riches that a man is to carry with him beyond this world—the riches of which the rude hand of death cannot rob a man—the riches that are to circulate and pass current in eternity,—these he has lost!

There lived a man that was clothed splendidly and fared sumptuously; but then he lived to enjoy himself. He died and was buried, and in hell he lifted up his eyes; he gained the world and lost his soul. Where was the profit?—There lived another man: he too gained the world and lost his soul. He had increased his goods and filled his barns with store, till the poor wretch cried out, 'What shall I do?' 'Do!' 'What shall I do!' Oh, if the man were here, I should tell him what to do. There is enough to do. Give to support the cause of God—visit the fatherless and the widow in their affliction. 'Do!' Clothe the naked, feed the hungry. Do good—support the cause of God. But no; not he! He will do something, however:—what does he? Why, he pulls down his barns—he builds greater, and there he bestows his goods; and then he says to his soul, 'Soul, take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry; thou hast much goods laid up'—Where? 'In heaven? Was his heart and his treasure there? No, no! His goods were laid up in the barns he had built. Was ever folly so egregious as this! God called him a 'fool,' and he shall not be miscalled by me—'Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee; then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?' The man gained the world, but he lost his soul! 'So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.' Where was the profit?

I am willing, my friends, to indulge in supposition on this subject; for what is the supposition that truth will not justify? I will suppose a man to be the emperor of the universe, literally to be the lord of this world; and that all the tribes and kindreds and languages and classes acknowledge his sway: he is the emperor of the world—he has it all—as much as he can enjoy or possess. He has all this, to the loss of religion and of his soul. How then stands the question? How little of the world can he ever see—how little can he ever enjoy? Why, the man cannot absolutely wear two crowns conveniently to himself—he cannot occupy even two of his royal palaces at the same time! Look, for a moment, at the qualities of the soul and his world! The world is material, the soul is spiritual; the world is limited, the soul has desires and capacities that are boundless—the world is too little for it! What is there here that is suited to its nature? The world is gross and senseless, the soul is sentient and rational; the world is perishable, the soul is imperishable and shall never die; he gains the world, and loses his soul; and where is the profit?

I will indulge in supposition yet again, and I will suppose, if you please, a human being coeval with the world, and that that human being is to continue as long as the world endures—he would be about six thousand years old now; but his eye has not become dim—his faculties and powers of enjoyment have not failed, and he is to be satiated with pleasure, and he is to remain in the world while it continues to exist. He has had all he can desire or possess from its creation, he has had all the honor and wealth which has been enjoyed by this world's teeming population through the whole period of its existence; but now this world consumes and he expires! How stands the case? He has had the world for time—he has lost his soul for eternity! Where is the profit?—I remember how beautifully this idea is illustrated by the ever-memorable Addison, in one of the papers in 'The Spectator,' where he shews, with much beauty and convincing truth, that one soul is capable of more enjoyment to eternity than could possibly be enjoyed by any given number of souls for any limited period. There is no proportion between the one and the other. There is some proportion between a particle of matter and the globe—there is some proportion between a drop of water and the ocean; but there can be none between the little drop of time and the shoreless, fathomless ocean of eternity. The man, then, that gains the whole world for time and loses his soul for eternity, can gain no profit.

But I will indulge in supposition still farther, and truth shall still justify the supposition. I will then suppose more worlds than one, and you may go on, in your imagination, adding world to world and system to system, to any given number; and suppose a man to be

able to call them all his own—they are all acknowledged to be his, —he has them, but he has them to the loss of his soul; how stands the case? Let all these worlds be put into one scale and the soul into the other—let impartial justice hold the balance—let wisdom direct the process—let truth pronounce the decision, and we know what the language will be—'World on world, one soul outweighs them both!'

Thus far have I illustrated the statement in the text—What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?' Are, then, these things so? So they are, my brethren; for these, after all, are the words of truth and soberness.

We learn, then, in the first place, that it must be man's first interest and highest duty, to regard the salvation of his soul as the one great business of his life. What is there that deserves comparison with it that can occupy our thoughts or engage our attention? Our souls are our all—they are our understanding—they are our life—they are our happiness! By what strange infatuation, then—by what perversity and folly do you prefer the interests of the world to those of the soul? You pronounce condemnation on Judas who betrayed his Master for forty pieces of silver; take heed, sinner, lest thou sell thy soul for a still more worthless sum! You condemn Esau, who sold his temporal birth-right for a mess of pottage; beware, sinner, lest thou sell thy soul for a momentary gratification! Oh, but dost thou begin to see that the soul is valuable? Then that is one point gained. Dost thou begin to see that thy soul is in peril? That is another point gained. Dost thou see that thou canst not save thyself—and dost thou ask, What must I do? I tell thee, then, there is one who is able and willing to save thee, and his name is Jesus. To save thee he lived and died and rose again —to save thee he makes intercession. Oh, that every poor sinner would flee, without delay—sinful, guilty, polluted, perishing as they are—into his outstretched arms of love! What does Jesus say?—'Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.' Although you have been so unworthy, so guilty, so base, so ungrateful—although you have so long turned a deaf ear to his call, he says, 'Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.' Why, not to be cast out, is to be taken in—not to be excluded, is to be admitted; and he will admit you into his glorious kingdom; you shall be justified and sanctified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of your God.

Then, O then, in every period of your religious experience, whenever the world would allure—whenever temptation would solicit —whenever riches would entice, remember the statement of the text:—'What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world,

and lose his own soul ? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul ? ' Let this thrill through the heart while it vibrates on the ear, and then shall you, by the grace of God, pass through things temporal so as not to lose the things that are eternal; and with heaven in reserve, you shall have heaven begun below !

Finally : If the soul be so valuable, those who are in a state of salvation ought to exert themselves to the utmost to promote the salvation of others. That man does not know the worth of his own soul who does not attach value to the souls of others—that man does not taste the sweets of religion himself who would not wish his fellow sinners to be blessed as he is blessed—that man is not in the way of heaven who is not anxious to take others along with him ; nor has he any reason to expect happiness there, if he would wish to go alone. My friends, the religion of Jesus Christ is diffusive; and if we know the worth of our own souls, we shall duly value the souls of others. If we possess the means of grace and enjoy the blessings of salvation ourselves, we should wish all our fellow creatures to be partakers of like precious faith.

THE VALUE OF THE SOUL

———'Be wise, nor make
Heaven's highest blessing vengeance; O be wise!
Nor make a curse of immortality!
Say, knowest thou what it is, or what thou art;
Knowest thou the importance of a soul immortal.
Behold this midnight glory: worlds on worlds!
Amazing pomp; redouble this amaze!
Ten thousand add; add twice ten thousand more;
Then weigh the whole; one soul outweighs them all,
And calls the astonishing magnificence
Of unintelligent creation poor.'

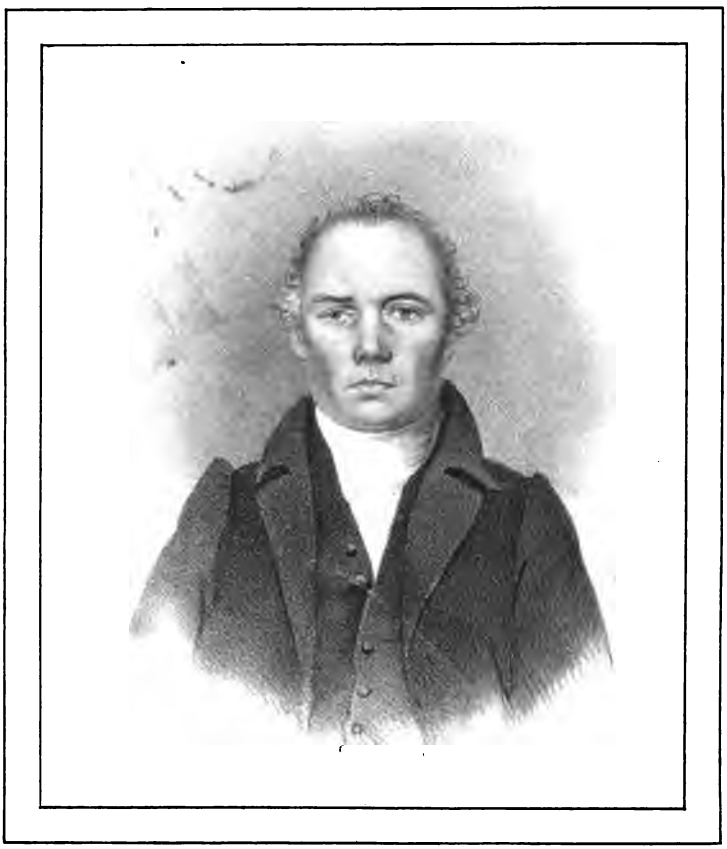
THE SOUL.

By Montgomery.

What is the thing of highest price
The whole creation round?
That which was lost in Paradise,—
That which in Christ was found—
The soul of man—Jehovah's breath,
That keeps two worlds at strife;
Hell moves beneath to work its death,
Heaven stoops to give it life.

God to reclaim it did not spare
His well beloved Son;
Jesus to save it deigned to bear
The sins of all in one;
The Holy Spirit seal'd the plan
And pledged the blood divine,
To ransom every soul of man;
That price was paid of mine!

And is this treasure born below,
In earthen vessels frail;
Can none its utmost value know,
'Till flesh and spirit fail?
Then let us gather round the cross,
That knowledge to obtain,
Not by the soul's eternal loss,
But everlasting gain.



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REV. JOHN LINDSEY.

SERMON XIV.

THE MEDIATION OF CHRIST.

BY REV. JOHN LINDSEY,
OF THE NEW ENGLAND CONFERENCE.

'Without shedding of blood is no remission: Heb. ix. 22.'

Nothing can transcend the readiness with which the divine mind marked the condition of man, the moment he apostatized from God. The sorrows of the fall were hardly felt, remorse had only begun to prey upon the conscience, and guilt to rally its terrors, when a hope as consoling as it was unexpected dawned from heaven upon our revolted race. 'I will put,' said God to the tempter, 'enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.' All the subsequent revelations concerning the redemption of sinners, are included in this original promise.

The doctrine of the Messiah's person, of his sacrifice, of his triumph, together with that vast system of prediction, which extends from the beginning to the end of time, and all the corresponding dispensations of the new covenant, are nothing but its regular developement. God proved that he could pity, as soon as we had made ourselves guilty and miserable. He afforded an irresistible demonstration of his compassion in contriving a method of deliverance from the disastrous consequences of the fall. It was then that his mercy was most strikingly and impressively displayed, when he actually sent his Son into the world to carry into effect the purposes of his love to a lost race. Then was a new channel opened for the divine benevolence to flow to man. Then the loving-kindness of Deity became blended with the sympathies of humanity; and the result is, that in Jesus the Son of God, we have an High Priest who is in all respects capable of being touched with the feeling of our infirmities, who has shed his precious blood for our sin.

The doctrine of remission of sins through the blood of that victim

who was once offered for the sins of the world, forms the grand peculiarity of the Gospel, and was the principle of the Apostolic ministry, and is now pre-eminently the power of God to salvation. It is the sun and centre of the whole system of divine truth, 'Without the shedding of blood is no remission;' without it, there is no medium of approach to God, there is no way for the divine benevolence to flow to man. The obvious design of the Author of our text is to show, that there is no salvation but through the mediation of Jesus Christ. And that this doctrine might be clearly perceived by the Jewish Church the law would not grant any remission of sins without the blood of a victim: which victim was a type of the Lamb of God slain for us, but now exalted to the right hand of God, where 'He ever liveth to make intercession for us.' The subject for our present consideration, is the Mediation of Jesus Christ.

I. The necessity of the mediation of Christ. The truth of this sentiment is so clearly sustained by the sacred writers, that no believer in divine revelation can withhold his most implicit confidence in the doctrine. But while all Christians believe that Christ died in consequence of sin, there is a diversity of opinion respecting the manner in which the death of Christ affects the immortal interests of men. Has Christ Jesus in his death and sufferings become the real propitiation to divine justice for our sins? or has he, by displaying his transcendent excellencies, shown us the true dignity of human nature, the elevation to which it may be raised, and finally becoming a martyr to the truth thereby become the Saviour of men? The former opinion is the doctrine taught both in the Old and New Testament, in relation to the death of Christ. On this fact was all the sacrificial system of the Jewish Church founded, without it their sacrifices have no meaning or importance attached to them. The indispensable necessity of this mediation will, most clearly, appear from a consideration of the nature of the awful attribute of divine justice. Jehovah is essentially, infinitely just. It is not in the nature of justice in any mode or in any degree to remit punishment. It is the office of justice to see that the penalty annexed to the violated laws be strictly enforced. It never can ask more than its due; and less than its due it will never accept. The law which divine justice supports is eternal in its obligations; therefore its penalties cannot be limited. Its claims cannot be affected by distance or by time; till those claims are satisfied they pursue their victims to the extremities of the universe, and to the ages of eternity. The divine law is universal in its requirements. It addresses itself to inward feelings and sentiments as well as outward acts, demands the obedience of the heart as well as the life. It demands the most perfect obedience, and to fail in any one point is to be guilty of the whole law: to fail only in the spirit of duty renders the delinquent liable to suffer the

whole penalty of the law. The fearful and awful consequences connected with a liability to suffer the penalty which divine justice inflicts are augmented by the fact that this law is a transcript of the moral perfections of Jehovah.

It is an emanation of the divine wisdom and goodness. Nothing can possibly transcend the sublimity, moral dignity, and excellency of this divine code. All that is wise, just and good are here concentrated.

This divine constitution originally provided for the obedient all that our natures were capable of enjoying.

If therefore we finally fall under its penalties, our state must be all that weight of woe our natures are capable of suffering.

It is a fact as incontestible as it is melancholy, that all mankind have transgressed the law of God. 'Now we know that what things soever the law sayeth, it sayeth to those who are under the law, that every mouth may become guilty before God.' If, therefore, justice be an essential perfection of the Deity—if it be that strict and inviolable principle, which we have represented, it is manifest that the penalty of the law in all its unmitigated extent must be executed unless some one able to answer the claims of infinite justice undertake to mediate between God and his offending subjects. If we have therefore rightly considered the guilt of man and the perfections of Jehovah, we must clearly see the necessity of a vicarious sacrifice for the sins of the world and a constant mediation between God and man.

But it may be thought we have come to this conclusion by overlooking the loving kindness of our Heavenly Father, who, though just, is capable of exercising mercy.

May not confession and penitence be accepted as satisfaction for sin?

Penitence however deep, repentance however universal, can never change our relation to the divine government nor can they remove the legal obstacles to the exercise of the divine mercy.

As well may the condemned criminal tender the civil judge penitence and proffers of amendment, and thereby hope to escape the punishment to which he is doomed. Justice precludes the possibility of such a commutation without satisfaction. Jehovah can as soon cease to exercise benevolence, as divine justice can cease to demand satisfaction for sin. No less certain, therefore, is the execution of the penalty of the law on the finally impenitent, than the bestowment of endless life on the 'good and faithful servants.' It would not only be inconsistent with the divine perfections of Jehovah to relax the rigor of his law but highly injurious to the moral interests of his intelligent creatures. God has not only a divine right to be obeyed as the Creator and Governor of the universe, but

the highest interests of his creatures are inseparably connected with uniform obedience to his will. As long therefore as God exercises divine benevolence toward men, so long he must demand uniform obedience to his law. Jehovah has his rights as maker and proprietor of his creatures which his essential rectitude obliges him to sustain, both as it regards his own moral dignity and the general good of his creatures. To sacrifice them, or to be indifferent in maintaining them, would involve the most serious evil in his moral government. To pardon the transgressor without suitable satisfaction would be in effect to sacrifice the claim of justice, and prostrate the dignity of the divine government. The supreme executive of a nation has no moral right to yield his claims for obedience, as stipulated in the laws of the land. The powerful principle of paternal love can never justify the sacrifice of paternal right to obedience. Should this in either case be done voluntarily, it would argue an indifference to that principle of rectitude on which such duties depend, and therefore a moral imperfection. Now this can never be attributed to God, and therefore he can never yield up his right to be obeyed. But may he not give up his right to punish, when disobedience has taken place?

This can never be done, unless it is manifest that in so doing he would not surrender any right to punish, or unless it is manifest he has not absolutely bound himself to punish. But neither of these can occur here. It is only by punitive acts that Jehovah makes known his right to be obeyed. If no punishment ensue, then it must follow that his right is given up. From the same principle that past offences are regarded with impunity, it would also follow that all future ones might be overlooked in like manner, and thus government would be at an end, and the obligation to obey God in effect cancelled, and in the divine mind there would be a manifest want of that love of rectitude which is the characteristic of a holy being, and that moral dignity which belongs to a wise and righteous governor. It may therefore be confidently concluded, that there is no relaxation of right in the divine administration and no forgiveness of sin by the exercise of mere prerogative.

II. The mediatory character of Jesus Christ will appear by examining the nature of his sufferings and death.

That the sufferings and death of Jesus Christ were vicarious, that he appeared to put away sin by his own death in distinction from a mere example, teacher, or martyr is unquestionably the doctrine of the inspired writers. This doctrine is so clearly taught in divine revelation as a fundamental principle and so interwoven with all the statements of truth and inculcations of duty throughout the Holy Scriptures, that to endeavor to exclude it from the system of chris-

tianity is as hopeless an attempt as to reverse the order of the natural world.

The whole account of the death of our Lord Jesus Christ teaches us, that it was an event of the utmost importance in the christian scheme. The death of Christ is always placed before us as the object of our faith, the ground of our hope, and the original, the meritorious means of our salvation.

Christ is represented by the inspired penman as bearing the punishment due to the sins of men. 'He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows. "Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many. Who his own self bore our sins in his own body on the tree.'" In these and similar passages of Scripture the sufferings and death of Jesus Christ are most obviously represented as vicarious.

Any other construction would be a violent wresting of the word of God. No other cause can be found for his peculiar sufferings than the sins of the world.

It is also most explicitly stated, that he gave his life a ransom for us, that he might redeem us unto God. 'This is my body which is given for you.' 'There is one God and one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all.' 'Ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price.'

In these passages of Scripture there seems to be an illusion to an ancient custom of redeeming slaves and captives by paying a sum of money for them. The family of man are represented as Jehovah's subjects. We have forfeited all our rights and privileges—our dignity is prostrated in the dust—our hopes are lost—justice is about to take its course and cut us off from all intercourse with our Maker, and shut us up in eternal perdition. But Christ appears to suffer, the just for the unjust, that repentance and remission of sins may be preached in his name. It was the express purpose of the divine mind that the death and sufferings of Christ should be the price of redemption for the guilty family, captives to sin, and imprisoned under condemnation to endless banishment from God.

The Scriptures allude to the death of Christ in the most plain and pointed manner, as an expiation for the sins of men. 'Behold the LAMB of God which taketh away the sin of the world.' 'Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, such as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a LAMB without blemish and without spot. The glorified in heaven unite in saying, 'worthy is the LAMB that was slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood.' The apostle acknowledges Christ as our passover sacrificed for us.

That these passages refer us to sacrifices under the law is too evident to be denied. Nor is it less clear, that this reference fixes the sense in which these passages are to be understood. Under

the Mosaic economy the worshipper who brought and sacrificed his victim was taught and acted under the conviction that the guilt he had contracted was transferred to his victim, whose death was accepted instead of his own. Indeed if expiatory sufferings be denied there is no idea of sacrifice left. Ever then let it be the joy and glory of the Christian that it is Jesus Christ who is the antitype of those types, the substance of those shadows contained in the ceremonial law. It is Jesus who is pre-eminently the sacrificial victim, the Lamb without blemish, the Lamb of God, who by his sufferings and death presented unto the Father in his own person the true atonement for the sins of guilty men.

The very peculiar and remarkable circumstances of the death of Jesus Christ have been by some of the most able divines considered as affording conclusive evidences that his death was an expiation for us, and we see no possible way to account for them on any other principle. Amidst all those prodigies attendant on the Redeemer's passion, there is nothing which to a reflecting mind will appear so remarkable as that deep sorrow, that depression of spirit, that conflict of feeling which he manifested during the closing scenes of life. Hear how he was affected as the awful event drew nigh. 'He began to be sore amazed and to be very heavy. His deep sufferings forced from him the mournful complaint, 'My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death.' Behold him in the garden of Gethsemane, contemplating the awful hour he was about to experience.

Hear his prayer. 'And being in agony he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.' Think of that most importunate supplication thrice repeated, urged in agony and accompanied with cries and tears; 'O my father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me.' Behold him in that solemn and awful hour when the sword of the 'Almighty awoke against his fellow,' when divine justice was receiving satisfaction for sin, and hear his exclamation; 'My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me?

Can there be any congruity with the sentiment that Jesus died as a martyr, and these extraordinary circumstances of his death? The annals of martyrdom furnish us with accounts of the most triumphant deaths, instances of fortitude unmoved, amid torture unexampled. Martyrs with joy seized the stake and exulted amidst the flames. Now if the adorable Jesus were only a martyr would he not in his death have manifested the most perfect peace and composure? Would he not have shown fortitude of soul and triumph of spirit? Would not the circumstances of his death have been more glorious than any that ever succeeded him?

Of all the thousands who came forward to claim the martyr's wreath, whose mind was so perfectly illumined on the great and

awful subjects of the invisible world? whose nature so immaculate, whose conscience so unsullied, and whose life so entirely devoted to every noble and holy work? Of all the countless millions who have visited the tomb, who had such prospects beyond it? He knew that myriads of angels were at his will. He knew that it would soon be said 'Be ye lifted up ye everlasting doors, and let the king of glory come in.' He knew that he should soon set down with his Father on his throne. Had the death of Jesus Christ, therefore, been that of a martyr, it would have transcended every other death in the exultation of triumph and the raptures of joy.

But what was the fact? Our Redeemer weeps. He turns pale. He revolts. He trembles; and in these agonies—in this bloody sweat of the benevolent and adorable Jesus the doctrine of the atonement is preached, with a power that is almost irresistible, with an evidence which is overwhelming.

No conclusion can be more clear, than that the conduct of the incarnate Son of God must forever remain inexplicable in prospect of his dissolution, except on the principle laid down by the author of our text that 'without shedding blood, there is no remission. That he died for our sin and rose again for our justification.'

III. Let us in the third place notice the fitness and importance of this institution, by which sin is put away by the mediation of Christ. In order that this economy perfectly harmonize with the divine perfection, there must be perfect freedom on the part of the sufferer. It would be an act of injustice, that would shock every well disposed mind, imperiously to require the innocent to suffer for the guilty. Whenever such an offering takes place, it should originate with the innocent person. This was the case in the offering of Jesus Christ for our sins. He came not only by authority, but such was his infinite love that he came voluntarily. He expressed the deepest interest in his undertaking. In announcing the deep scenes of sorrow through which he must pass in his life, and more particularly at the hour of his crucifixion, nothing is more plain than that he gave himself up to it voluntarily, according to the settled purpose of his own mind.

No victim ever went more willing to the altar. He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and evinced a readiness to be offered up. 'He endured the cross, despising the shame, for the joy that was set before him,' that inconceivably glorious reward, the endless felicity of an innumerable company of intelligent creatures, who must have perished, if he had not for them shed his blood. That this institution appear fit and proper, it would seem important not only that the sacrifice offered accord with the dignity of the offended sovereign, but that it be equal to the interest put in jeopardy by the suffering party for whom it interposes.

But the aggregate value of those interests must be supposed to be in some proportion to the rank and dignity of the party to which they belong. As a sacrifice to justice the life of a mean and worthless person must, on this principle, be deemed a most inadequate substitute for that of a pure and elevated character. We should consider the requisitions of justice eluded, rather than satisfied, by such a commutation. It is on this principle that St. Paul declares it to be impossible for the blood of bulls and of goats to take away sin. Such is the comparative meanness of the brute creation that such a victim could be of no consideration in the eyes of offended justice. Though they annually exhibited a remembrance of sin, they had no merit by which its guilt could be expiated.

In this view, the redemption of the human race seemed to be hopeless, and their escape from merited destruction on any principle connected with law and justice absolutely impossible. For where could an adequate substitute be found. Who is there that ever possessed such pre-eminent dignity and worth, that the oblation of himself should be deemed a suitable offering to divine justice for the whole race of man. The suffering victim must be invested with a frail and mortal nature, but with such a nature only, he has no elevation among his brethren, and how can he become their substitute. Here a dilemma presents itself, from which there seems no possibility of escape. If man is left to experience the penalty of the violated law his ruin is inevitable. If he is redeemed, the person by whom he is redeemed must possess a combination of qualities not to be found within the compass of human nature. He must be frail and mortal or he cannot die a sacrifice, and dying as a sacrifice, he must himself possess infinite dignity in order to make it infinitely meritorious.

Such, to human minds, were the insurmountable difficulties in the way of our redemption—difficulties which made it impossible for the highest intelligencies to solve the question. How shall man be just with God.

The mystery hid from ages and generations, presents in the person of the Redeemer all the qualifications which can be conceived necessary to a perfect and satisfactory oblation to answer all the demands of infinite justice. By his participation of flesh and blood, he becomes susceptible of suffering, and within himself possesses the materials of a sacrifice. By its formal union with the eternal word, the infinitely glorious nature, the sufferings sustained acquired an infinite value, so as to be justly deemed an equivalent to the penalty originally denounced. The attributes of time and those of eternity, the elements of being the most opposite, and deduced from opposite worlds, combined to give efficacy to our Redeemer's sacrifice.

'They constitute a person who has no counterpart in heaven or on earth; who may be most justly denominated "Wonderful," composed of parts and features, of which the combination and union nothing short of infinite wisdom could have conceived or infinite power effected. What transcendent dignity does the Apostle attach to this sacrifice, when after adverting to the inherent meanness and insufficiency of the victims offered under the ceremonial law, to take away sin, and acknowledging that they availed to purify the flesh, he says, "How much more shall the blood of Christ who through the eternal spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works, to serve the living and true God." '

When we contemplate that personage, in whose face we behold the outbeamings of the divine glory and the express image of his person, there is something so stupendous in his voluntary humiliation and death that to convince us of the fact, the most powerful and unequivocal testimony is indispensably necessary. But to be convinced of the validity of such a sin-offering and its sufficiency for all the purposes for which an offering can be made; to perceive it to be the most ample vindication of the moral attributes of God, in the great work of putting down sin and delivering the human mind from its influence, no effort is necessary whatever. Such a persuasion insinuates itself with the greatest ease, and takes the firmest possession of the mind. 'He that spared not his own son, but freely gave him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things.'

The inspired penman appear to be filled with devout admiration, that eternal life should be bestowed on sinful man; but that it should be bestowed at such a cost is still greater cause of wonder and admiration. This subject has a depth that angelic minds cannot sound. With adoring wonder they continue to 'look into it,' and retiring, exclaim, 'O the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God, how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out.'

Here we behold the Deity in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing to them their trespasses. Here we discern the harmony of the divine attributes as they are exerted in the benevolent and glorious work of redeeming and saving lost souls.

The fitness and importance of the manifestation of the Son of God to take away sin will also appear from the consideration, that in no other way could have been so fully exhibited its turpitude and malignity. The displeasure of the Almighty against the violation of his law and contempt of his government is fearfully manifest in the dispensations of his providence. For this, judgments awful and alarming visit individuals, cities, and nations. But the nature of

this stupendous evil is most fearfully manifest, when we accompany the Saviour through the successive stages of his short life of trials, each of which was more severe than the former, until the cloud, that had been charging with materials which none but an Almighty hand could have collected, burst upon him in a deluge of agony and blood. How deep must have been the stain of that pollution that required the heart's blood of the Son of God to wash it out! How inconceivable the demerit of sin, when it cries out for such a sacrifice! Can it be matter of wonder that with the incorrigible impenitents there should be a fearful looking for of wrath and indignation, or that the 'smoke of their torment should ascend up forever and ever.'

The fitness and importance of this institution, by which sinners may be restored to the divine friendship, will further appear, when we consider that of all things exhibited in the divine administration nothing is so calculated to awaken grateful feelings in the heart and inspire confidence in God. It insures the returning sinner pardon and reconciliation with God, and ascertains the ground on which these rest. It furnishes a sufficient support for the divine law, (instead of 'making void,' it establishes the law,) and such testimony of the Deity's displeasure against transgression as renders it unnecessary to inflict punishment on penitent believers. The whole of the divine exhibition in this great work manifests the most striking proof of the clemency of the Father towards our lost race, and is therefore calculated to inspire the most implicit confidence in God's willingness to receive into his favor even the chief of sinners, on condition of his repentance towards God and faith in Christ Jesus. Every possible assurance is given that 'there is now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit. In this evangelical economy, there is an astonishing adaptation to the present condition of human nature, and the strongest tendency to produce the most admirable moral results. Is it not therefore matter of surprise that the doctrine of the atonement should be so obstinately contested by those in particular who pretend to be the most rational Christians? If any one thing in the divine economy has stronger claims than any other on the confidence of rational beings, it is the doctrine of 'God manifest in the flesh.'

Sin has not only rendered man obnoxious to punishment and deprived him of all claim to the divine favor, but it has left him unable to return to the path of duty, and to discharge the obligation he is under to God. A remedy for this state of moral weakness was indispensably necessary to save the enlightened penitent from despondency. The mediation of Jesus Christ has abundantly provided for all our moral disabilities, by securing the agency of the Holy Ghost

for the radical change of the heart and the moral improvement of our minds. He guides into all truth and his fruits are love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, brotherly kindness, temperance. These constitute the distinguishing ingredients of the Christian character and its qualifications for the joys of heaven. Without the divine aid, secured by the mediation of Christ, as well might we reverse the laws of nature, as attain these divine qualifications; but with this aid the soul is emboldened to begin the most noble and important conquest in which an immortal spirit can be engaged, and which will secure to it the most glorious victory. It is this purifying and exalting energy which has produced all the illustrious and magnificent displays of the Christian character, during the successive periods of the church. It has enabled the followers of Christ to maintain their cause with fortitude and prudence, and sustained them in bonds, tortures, and death. It has strengthened them against the fascinations of worldly pleasure, splendor, and power, and induced them to count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus their Lord. It has in every vicissitude of life, shed on their souls serenity and happiness, as far as either is compatible with our state of trial, and inspired a state of mind suited to an immutable and eternal state of existence.

The fitness and importance of this institution will also appear from a consideration of the vast and glorious object contemplated by Jesus Christ in his mediation. 'He gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.'

'He is the propitiation for the sin of the whole world.' Although the mediation of Jesus Christ furnishes no ground for the unconditional salvation of any person, yet it has made the salvation of every individual of our race, possible. Although it has not changed our natural relation to the divine government, or suspended in any degree our obligations to God, it has removed every legal difficulty which prevented the exercise of the divine benevolence to man. The terms on which eternal life is offered are every way suited to man's condition, and honorable to the divine government; an opportunity is now furnished for the righteousness of the law to be fulfilled by the exercise of evangelical faith, that faith which works by love, and purifies the heart. The highest felicity of man in his present state, consists in the exercise and improvement of the nobler faculties of his nature. The consummation of his future bliss must comprehend these enjoyments, brought to the highest degree of perfection, freed from every impediment which now obstructs them, and placed in a course of endless progression. The reunion of the soul to a body so improved and refined as that body must be that is to be fashioned 'according to the glorious body of our Lord Jesus Christ, furnishes

an admirable display of the divine economy in regard to the future condition of man. For by this, the entire being will be resuscitated, and his compound nature be restored to the highest degree of perfection of which it is susceptible. This important fact disclosed to us by revelation, corresponds with the whole analogy of nature, in which constant transmutations are observed, and reproductions are generated according to stated laws.

Although future happiness will not be different in kind from that of which man is now capable, yet in degree it will infinitely transcend it. Considering the medium through which the mind will be elevated, and the circumstance of its having accomplished a most painful and perilous warfare, sustained its virtues, and increased its graces under the most peculiar embarrassments, may we not confidently expect a superior state than that which belonged to man's original condition.

Not for one age or nation then, was the mediation of Jesus Christ instituted, but for all nations and generations of men. How vast, how glorious the object! It is a sun, by Jehovah ordained to shine, until its effulgent beams have illumined all our moral world, and with its glory filled our earth. To the remotest periods of time, through the inconceivable ages of eternity its influence will be felt. Pointing to a state of honor, immortality, and eternal life, we are assured that our great Redeemer will again appear on the earth. A voice shall ere long be heard from the 'throne,' 'behold I make all things new.' Then shall we behold a new heaven and new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Then shall the ransomed of the Lord return to their Eden regained, with songs and everlasting joy. With a strength and elevation of mind superior to anything before enjoyed, shall the redeemed contemplate the perfections of the divine mind, ponder the deep purposes of his providence, delight in the order of his government, and become perfectly assimilated to his glorious image.

How uninteresting is every other object compared with the interests of the Saviour's mediation! How evidently marked with the most benevolent design towards our fallen race! How worthy the nature of its divine author! How astonishingly blind must be that mind, that does not perceive in the doctrine of the incarnation of Christ, sufficient cause for the most sincere and devout gratitude to God, and conscientious devotion to the requirements of the gospel of Christ! Should this sun be removed from our moral world, how dreadful the darkness with which we should be shrouded! How gloomy our prospects beyond the tomb! What can limited reason do in settling the great and awful question, where and how the immortal spirit shall exist beyond this world.

It is the lamp of divine revelation lighted by the breath of the

eternal Spirit, which alone can dispel the gloom that covers the future destiny of the soul, and fills the mind with anxiety and sorrow.

That distinguished and most important truth of the gospel which has engaged our attention, is capable of an application to the most interesting and practical purposes. It will deeply impress us with the evil of sin, it reflects the true features of moral evil and displays more of its demerit than the most profound contemplation of the law either in the purity of its precepts, or the terror of its sanctions. We may learn from this subject the certain ruin of those by whom Christ is rejected. 'The redemption of the soul is precious, but it ceaseth forever.'

'There remaineth therefore no more sacrifice for sins but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.' This is the only way of salvation. If neglected, an awful gulf must forever separate the soul from all the blessedness of the heavenly state.

This subject will, if properly contemplated, mortify and weaken the corruptions of our natures, and strengthen all the christian graces. It will inspire in an eminent degree especially that humility and meekness, which in the sight of God is of great price.

It should also produce sincere love to God, and good will to all men. If 'God so loved us, how ought we to love one another.'

If Christ gave himself for us, how ought we to give our all to the interests of his kingdom. What an example we have in the character of Christ. Oh, let us imitate the son of God in this delightful work. Let us transplant into our own souls all his virtues, and copy his illustrious example into our lives, that we may finally come to his kingdom with everlasting joy—that there we may pour our praises at his feet; and that there we may unite with all the redeemed, and all the sanctified, in magnifying the exceeding riches of his grace.

SERMON XV.

Delivered at Southwark Chapel, on Sunday Evening, September 2, 1832
Occasioned by the Death of Adam Clarke, LL. D. F. S. A.
M. R. I. A. &c. &c.

BY THE REV. J. E. BEAUMONT.

'Jesus said, I am the resurrection. JOHN, xi. 25.'

'THE voice said, Cry! And the prophet said, What shall I cry?' The voice said, 'Proclaim!' And the Prophet said, 'What shall I proclaim—what now shall I announce?' 'All flesh is grass—all flesh is grass! The grass withereth, the flower fadeth; because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand forever.'

I heard another voice from heaven, saying, 'Write.' 'I heard a voice from heaven'—and this voice relieves us under the pressure of the burden of the other communication—'I heard a voice from heaven, saying, From henceforth blessed are the dead that die in the Lord. Even so, saith the Spirit, for they rest from their labors, and their works do follow them.' That is the last beatitude in the Bible: the fifth chapter of Matthew has many beatitudes in it, but it has not all the beatitudes. The series of beatitudes that are in the fifth of Matthew have their growth and their development here; but the last beatitude that closes the Apocalypse, the revelation that was announced by a voice from heaven—that has its ripeness hereafter.

But here is, in the text, another voice—the voice of Jesus. Oh, let me hear this voice!

'Forever his dear sacred name
Shall dwell upon my tongue;
And Jesus and salvation be
The theme of every song.'

'Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me, shall never die. Believest thou this?' said he unto Martha at the grave of Lazarus. Here, in passing, let me remark, how thankful we ought to be for the Gospel according to John. It was penned after the other Gospels, and answers a particular purpose. It seldom narrates the facts of evangelical history which had already been substantiated in the mouth of two or three previous witnesses; but it possesses incidents, full of value and encouragement, which had been overlooked by the former evangelists, or which, at any rate, they had formed no place for in their records. John, you know, was the beloved and the loving disciple: and while the private friendship of Jesus had made but a slight impression on minds of a sterner order, it put an indelible stamp on his softer nature, and met with a faithful historian in his hands. The other evangelists proclaimed to the four winds of heaven the public doings and sayings and sufferings of their Lord. John, the beloved—John, whose heart was made of love, records the incidents that are of a more private, but not less instructive and encouraging character.

Such is the history of our Saviour's friendship with the family of Lazarus and Mary and Martha. The information was conveyed to Christ of the sickness of Lazarus. It was thought that he would have immediately sped unto the scene of affliction; but he tarried where he was for some time before he moved to the house of mourning. Upon his arrival, Lazarus was dead and buried. 'Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met him: but Mary sat still in the house. Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. But I know that, even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee. Jesus saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again. Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day. Jesus said unto her'—himself bearing witness unto the truth—'Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth on me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.'

I confess that my own feeble mind has been so stunned by the sore calamity that has come upon the church of God—by the indescribably-awful affliction that has overtaken us, as a section of that church,—that it has been all but impossible for me to attempt to fasten my attention upon any subject whatever. At the request of Mr. Toase, my superintendant, and at the request of the Leader's meeting of this circuit, I had yielded so far as to say that I would attempt, on this evening, God willing, some improvement of the bewildering, withering, overwhelmning visitation that has so sud-

denly overtaken us all. It has been but some few desultory fragments of time, except the hours at the dead of the night, that I have been able to secure to myself for anything like a consideration of this matter; and aware that those who might visit this house this evening would visit it not to hear the sermon so much as to catch some notice of the history and the character of the much-honored, much-loved, eminently-lamented man of God, who has passed away from us, I have occupied the most of those moments that I have been able to keep for the purpose, in drawing up such a notice of him as my own knowledge and the universal testimony of mankind and the church of Christ had supplied concerning him. Therefore, what I am going to say on the text is merely introductory to that.

There are three things on which I propose to fasten your attention for a short time. I am sure that I need not say to you, that on this occasion, perhaps, more than on any preceding one in my public life, I need the sympathy and the prayers of the people whom I am addressing, God grant that 'by the sadness of the countenance the heart may be made better!'

I propose first to develope the ravages of death, as implied in the language of the text; secondly, to contemplate the resurrection of the pious dead, as promised in the text; and, thirdly, to show you the connexion between that magnificent event and the mediation of the Redeemer, the Lord Jesus Christ. 'Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection and the life.' May God assist us in this service!

First: THE RAVAGES OF DEATH. These have of late been most afflictingly exhibited before us; but at present I propose to confine my attention to the death of ministers. Lazarus was a minister—a minister to the Lord Jesus Christ; not a preacher, indeed—not an evangelist; but he was an eminent friend of the Redeemer, and therefore no unfit type of the man of God whose death we mourn.

Ministers must die; we must change the pulpit for the grave—we must put off this tabernacle, as our Lord and Master hath shown us—we must put away the sacerdotal garment for the shroud: our voices that fall upon your ears must be choked and suffocated in death: the sanctuary, the pulpit, the place that now knows us, must know us no more.—Ministers have their afflictions. He that entereth on the work of the ministry, entereth into tribulation. Jesus said unto Peter—'Feed my sheep'—'feed my lambs.' Then said he unto him, 'When thou wast young, thou girdest thyself and walkedst whither thou wouldest; but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not.'

The death of ministers is exceedingly monitory and instructive. It may be a chastisement upon themselves or upon the church. They may have been unfaithful in some matter—they may have grieved the Lord as Moses did; and the Lord may say to them, as he said to Moses, that he must die: or as Aaron grieved the Lord; and Aaron died on the top of the mount; and Moses took the robes of Aaron and put them on his son.

The death of ministers may be a chastisement upon the church: either the church has made too much of them, or too little of them. It is not usual for the former to be the case—it is more usual for the latter. The church of Christ, I verily believe, is not guilty in the latter matter, as to the venerable man that is gone. The people of God for fifty years had invariably, transcendantly, unequivocally, universally honored and revered him: and no vicissitude that has occurred within half a century, has lowered him in the estimation of the members of Christ. His sun is gone down: you are told that he was seventy-two years of age; and although three score years and ten, his sun has gone down while it was yet day; for his natural strength was not much diminished; his eye had much of its original fire; there was much energy locked up in the sinews of his arms; there was a mass of muscular vigor in his trunk; there was astonishing power about him, physical and mental, to the last morning of his earthly existence: and therefore, in some sort he was not worn out. Oh, no! and this makes his death so much the more affecting. But still we learn from this history, that the death of ministers, and even ministers in the very efflorescence of their vigor—in the height of their usefulness—on the very summit of their influence, is for the glory of God. Stephen died in the very height of his usefulness: the attention of the church of Christ was drawn much to Stephen; he was developing amazing powers for the furtherance of the cause of God; but suddenly he was cut off. John the Baptist died in the midst of his years—in the very centre, as it seemed, of his energies. Ah! what has not death done! What mighty energies has it not stifled! What bright intellects has it not, apparently to us, quenched! Oh, the mighty dead! But it is all for the glory of God—it is all for the glory of Christ. So when Jesus was told that Lazarus was dead, and found all weeping and lamentation on that account, he told them that it was 'for the glory of God.' Ministers die; but Christ liveth: he liveth and reigneth forever; his immortality secureth the welfare of the church; his ascension to the right hand of the Majesty on high, is a pledge that his church shall flourish till the end of time. 'I am the resurrection.'

Secondly: Let me notice THE DELIGHTFUL DOCTRINE OF THE TEXT, CONCERNING THE RESURRECTION OF THE PIOUS DEAD.—

The resurrection of the dead is a doctrine of revelation. The heathen had some notion of the immortality of the soul: the light of nature, the teachings of philosophy, analogy, and many things, seemed to hold out to them some faint notice touching the immortality of the soul: but as to the resurrection of the body, that was never so much as dreamed of by any of the sages of antiquity. The Bible teaches the resurrection of the dead, and that not merely in certain passages, on the surface of which the doctfine lies before us; because, if you could expunge and separate those particular passages—which in so many words contain the promise and the pledge of the resurrection of the body—from the Divine record, still there would remain enough behind to substantiate the doctrine; for every essential doctrine of Scripture is not merely taught in some obvious passages, but it runs as clearly through the whole substance of revelation—it is mixed up with the whole mass. There are many passages, indeed, that teach the doctrine most fully and strikingly. Thus, for instance, in the lesson which forms part of the service of the burial of the dead—'Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the first fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. Then cometh the end'—that is, the consummation—'when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign till he hath put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith, All things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.' This passage is dark with excess of brightness: it reveals, however, clearly the resurrection of the dead.

But all must die now. There have been exceptions made, indeed: there was the exception of Enoch, in the antediluvian world, and the exception of Elijah in the postdiluvian world; one from each world, to afford a pledge of the resurrection of the antediluvian and the postdiluvian worlds. A human body went from the antediluvian world to heaven, and a human body went from the postdiluvian world to heaven, without the passage of death, without the degradation of the grave, to announce to us—and their translation is worth a thousand arguments, both as to the immortality of the soul and the resurrection of the body—they died not at all to tell us that those that lived and died in both worlds shall live again. 'I

am the resurrection.' Now we have no reason to expect that any exception will be made again, until the end of the world; for one generation after another must pass away by death, until the last generation. The last generation shall not die. Oh, how beautifully has the Apostle unfolded this to us! 'If,' says he, 'we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.' A change shall pass on those who shall be found alive at the second coming of Christ, analogous to that that shall pass on those that have died in the processes of the resurrection. How shall the bodies of those that shall be alive be changed into immortal, seeing they die not, seeing they rise not? How was the water at the marriage of Cana in Galilee turned into wine? The ordinary process of making wine is this—the rain descends from the clouds, falls upon the earth, meanders upon the soil, enters into the root of the vine, climbs up through the blood-vessels of the tree, circulates by the sap through the whole substance of the tree: a thousand atmospherical changes occur, and ultimately there is the juice of the grape expressed from the fruit by the hand of man. That is the ordinary way. But see Jesus at the marriage in Cana of Galilee. They told him that they wanted wine; and must they wait for wine to be prepared in the usual way? Oh, no! In a moment—instantly—was the water changed and became wine. Just so shall it be at the last day. How shall it be with those who shall be found alive when the Saviour descends in the clouds of the air? They shall not undergo the long processes of the transmutation that the dead in Christ undergo. In a moment—in the twinkling of an eye, the pulse of immortality shall beat and throb through the whole of their frames, and all the faculties of their primitive nature and their physical condition shall pass away in an instant: and there they are, immortal as those that have been raised from the dead.

We might be led to expect the resurrection of the body, *from the fact of the incarnation of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.* He became a partaker of our flesh: that same body that he had in Bethlehem—that he had in Gethsemane—that he had on Mount Calvary—that he had in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea—that he had on Mount Olivet,—that same body is now in the heaven of heavens, upon the pinnacle of the universe, crowned with light

and glory and blessedness. What! and shall Jesus Christ have taken hold of human nature—shall a body have been prepared for him—shall he have taken part and parcel of our common humanity—shall he have identified that with his own primitive and unoriginated nature, as the Son of God, the second person in the adorable Trinity—and shall that human nature remain part of the person of the Son of God through all the coming revolutions of eternity—and shall all the redeemed be gazing on human nature in the person of their Redeemer,—and shall they be without their own body? The fact of the incarnation of Christ, therefore—the fact of his having assumed our nature and taken that nature with him—having assumed a body and taken that with him into the heaven of heavens,—is a pledge that the bodies of his people shall be there also.

So again *the fact that the body of the believer is the temple of the Holy Ghost*, is another pledge of the resurrection of the body. What! shall the Holy Ghost make the very body of the believer his temple—shall the Holy Ghost, in some mysterious manner, ally himself with our very corporeal part, in order that that corporeal part may be purified—in order that all its energies and members may be sanctified to God—and shall that body lie forever in the ruins of the grave? Will not the Holy Ghost come down again, some day or other, to claim his temple—to claim that which it enshrined itself in while man was upon the earth? Why, the very fact that the Holy Ghost makes the body of man his temple, is itself a pledge that the body of the believer shall be raised at the last day.

'Why, then, should it be thought a thing incredible, that God should raise the dead?' It was not thought 'a thing incredible,' by Abraham. He, when on Mount Moriah, having Isaac his son with him, built an altar—laid the wood in order upon the altar, placed Isaac on the wood, and bound him on it; he had a knife in his hand, and there was the fire. Abraham went up the mountain to sacrifice—to take away the life of his son; and not only to take away his life, but he went on the top of the mountain to burn the dead body after he had taken away his life. Abraham went up to stand by the altar while it was burning the bones, flesh, and sinews of his son Isaac; and he was to stand by the altar while all the winds of heaven swept over the summit of the mountain, and carried the ashes of Isaac east, west, north, and south, and scattered them all over the four hemispheres of the globe. But he had faith enough to enable him to believe, that though that was the case—though the body of Isaac was burned to ashes, and though those ashes were diffused throughout every region of the habitable and uninhabitable parts of the globe,—he, by his faith, saw atom coming to atom, particle to particle, one part joining another; he stood by the altar

in faith and hope, and, in fact, saw the conjunction of all the fragments of Isaac—the reunion, the reconnexion of all the parts that had been severed by the processes of combustion; and, in fact, he saw the atoms come floating together at the command of God, and stood by the altar and saw the whole body of Isaac complete above the altar, and saw life entering into it, and saw Isaac rising above the altar and going into the arms of his father, and walking down the hill of Calvary to worship, as Abraham had said, with the servants that were left at the foot of it. Abraham believed all that: and if he believed that, "why should it be thought a thing incredible that God should raise the dead?"

It would be interesting if I were here to follow out the view that is given us in Scripture of the resurrection of the body of the believer; but our time and my strength compel me—that is, the want of both compels me to pass over this altogether. I can merely glance at the promise; and now I pass on to notice,

Thirdly, THE CONNEXION BETWEEN THIS MAGNIFICENT EVENT AND THE MEDIATION OF THE REDEEMER.—'Jesus said, I am the resurrection.'

I remark here, first *that the resurrection of the believer has been purchased by the merits of Christ—that it has been procured by the mediation of Christ.* I know that it is very common for us to say, that death is natural: we say, that to die is natural. That is plausible, but not true: it is not natural to die. Our philosophers tell us, that the death of the body was part of the original plan of God at the formation of the body of man—that it was a part of the original scheme which God entertained when he formed man; and therefore they say, that death is natural. Death was not a part of God's original plan—death was not a part of the scheme—death did not enter into the arrangement. When God made man he made him immortal—he made his body immortal; and, in fact, it seems that man had, in the garden of Eden, the means of effecting the immortality of his body: there was 'the tree of life' that was in the midst of the garden. Death has been brought in by sin; death is the penalty of the transgression of the law of God; death is the curse which has been engendered by sin. When man took of the fruit of the forbidden tree, its 'mortal taste brought death into our world;' and were it not for the mediation of the Lord Jesus Christ, there would be no resurrection to life. What does that passage say that we quoted just now? 'As in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive.' The doctrine teaches us that all men die—that they undergo the death of the body as the consequence of Adam's transgression.

I know that this is one of the deep things of God, which we can but very imperfectly develope; but the doctrine of Scripture is ex-

ceedingly clear, that the universal death of mankind is the consequence of the one transgression of Adam, his progenitor. Se we are especially taught by the Apostle, in the epistle to the Romans. He says, that 'as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned: for until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law.' Then he goes on to argue—'Nevertheless, death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression.' Its influence, therefore, extends over infants and idiots; neither infants nor idiots ever sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression; there was no voluntary moral trespass on the part of infants or idiots; and yet both die, though neither the one nor the other ever sinned 'after the similitude of Adam's transgression.' The argument of the Apostle is this: that there is no death when there is no transgression—that there is no transgression when there is no law—that there is no law that touches infants and idiots—and that as infants and idiots die a physical death, they die for the infraction of the law perpetrated by Adam, their first father. That is the clear doctrine of Scripture. But another doctrine as clear, is—that as in Adam all die, in Christ we are made alive again; and that what we lost by the first Adam we recover by the second.

I remark, secondly, *that Jesus Christ has given us a pledge of the resurrection of believers, in the fact of his own resurrection:* He has given us the proof and example of it in his own history. So that passage which we read before in the Corinthians, evidently teaches us: 'Christ the first fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming'—'they that are Christ's,'—that is, believers.

Here I am aware there are two things which ought to be embodied. The one is to show the fact of our Saviour's resurrection; and the other is, to show how that fact is a proof of the resurrection of his people from the dead. I must be exceedingly brief on each of these.

The proofs of our Saviour's resurrection. These are threefold: they are negative, positive, and cumulative.

Negative. All will allow that Jesus died; infidels allow that: all will allow that Jesus was buried; infidels allow that: all will allow that his corpse was not in the grave the third day after its crucifixion. The question then comes, where was it? If it had risen out of the grave, it must have been somewhere. Let the high priest produce the body: let the scribes and pharisees produce the body. If they assert that the body of Christ has not risen from the grave, I demand the body of them; let them produce it, and then we will know that it has not risen from the grave. But as it was not in the grave, though it had been there, and as nobody could find

the corpse any where, nobody could produce it. The negative evidence is as clear as anything can be, that the body of Christ must have risen out of the grave.

The positive evidence is, that he was actually seen alive after his death and burial—that he was seen alive by those that had been most intimate with him before his crucifixion. Observe what they say: they don't tell us some speculation—they don't give us something problematical; they tell us that they saw him—that they touched him—that they handled him—that they thrust their hands into his side, and into the print of the nails—that some doubted and afterwards believed; and all of these were determined to maintain the fact of having seen him alive, at all hazards and at all perils.

There are only three ways of accounting for the conduct of these men: one is, that they were impostors: another is, that they were deluded, though not impostors: you know the other—that they were honest men, and told the truth.

The *first* hypothesis is, that they were impostors. That, however, is now given up: infidels cannot come to that now at all; they allow that the thing has not a leg to stand upon: it has gone down completely, that the apostles were impostors—everything about their history shows they were not impostors.

The *second* hypothetical explanation of the phenomenon is, that they were deluded—that some fallacy was passed upon them—that some trick or other was crammed down their throats—that some manœuvre was played off on them—and that they were the victims of designing men. I appeal to those who have read the four Evangelists and the Acts of the Apostles, to say, whether or no every word, every deed, every suffering of the lives of the apostles, subsequent to the resurrection of Christ, does not prove that they had common sense. And if they had but that, it is impossible that such an imposition could be played off upon them, as to make them believe that Christ had risen from the dead, when he had done no such thing.

The *third* conclusion is the honest and the true one. I feel that here I carry along with me the sweet concurrence of the immense crowd of human intellects that are within the application of the sentiment I am now bringing forward. The only other conclusion is, that they were honest men, and told the truth. So much for the positive evidence.

But the evidence is *cumulative*. The apostle argues, in his own irresistible manner, that if Christ is not risen from the dead, we are yet in our sins. I know that there are some scores, some hundreds, in this house of God to-night, whose sins have been forgiven them—that in that sense they are not yet in their sins: but how has that come about? How has it come about that you are

now accepted, and are walking in the sunshine of the countenance of the Almighty? It must have come about by God having accepted a satisfaction for your sins—that he has forgiven them; and in virtue of that satisfaction, you yourselves believing in it, Jesus has forgiven you your sins. The evidence, then, of that satisfaction being accepted, must have been the resurrection of Christ from the dead: as the apostle argues, in the eighth chapter of the epistle to the Romans, where he says, 'Who is he that condemneth?' he throws out that triumphant challenge—'Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died; yea, rather that is risen again.' For the fact of his resurrection proves the acceptance of the oblation of his death; and the fact of your being pardoned is a proof that Christ is risen; for if he were not risen, what an universal gloom would hover over the conscience of every individual! Christ, then, is risen from the dead.

Then the other thing remaining, is, *to state how the fact of the resurrection of Christ from the dead, is a proof of the resurrection of his people from the dead.* I wish I had time to go into this. It is evidence of it in many ways. The resurrection of Christ from the dead proves that he was a true teacher—that he spoke the truth, because he foretold his own resurrection. He said, 'Destroy this temple, and in three days I will build it again.' They did destroy that body, and in three days it was built again. He proves, therefore, that he was a true teacher: and as he proves he was a true teacher, he proves also the resurrection of the believing people of God: we have an evidence of the one in the truth of the other.—So, again, Jesus Christ came to destroy the works of the devil. Death is emphatically the devil's work: the devil is said to have the power of death; but Jesus Christ has come to destroy the devil's work—to counteract the devil's work—to undo the damage he has done—to repair the mischief he has engendered—to render innoxious the venom and poison he has injected into human nature. And I say—and so the Bible says, and so the fairest consideration of the matter says—that if Jesus leaves the bodies of his people in the grave forever—if he does not ransom them, and prove the death of death,—then the devil's work is not counterworked. But, blessed be God, Jesus Christ has not undertaken to do that which he cannot accomplish; and having come to destroy the works of the devil, he will enter into the grave, empty its caverns, call up his people, unlock the prison-house, bring out the dead to life and light and liberty; and then shall come the jubilee of the resurrection—'Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Death is swallowed up in victory!' The resurrection of Christ, then, is the example and the proof of the resurrection of his people.

I find I am going into the matter at much greater length than I

intended, or ought to have done. There are some inferential remarks with which I think I ought to close the sermon part of this exercise.

The first inference is, *What an awful curse is sin!* Oh, it has made this land a land of graves! Oh, it has made this planet of our's 'the valley of the shadow of death!' Oh, it has broken in pieces families! Oh, it has torn asunder the tenderest relations! Oh, it has snapt the connexion between the church and its ministers! Oh, sin, sin! what hast thou done! and oh, sinner, what art thou doing? Thou art drinking sin as the ox drinketh up water—living in sin and wallowing in it. May God convince thee of sin!

Then, secondly, *What a blessing is Christ Jesus to a lost world!*—Are we blind? He is the light of the world.—Are we afar off? He brings us nigh.—Are we wandering sheep? He is the Good Shepherd who leaves the ninety and nine and goes after the stray sheep into the wilderness. Are we guilty? He procures us pardon. Are we polluted? He opens to us a fountain for sin and for uncleanness. Are we miserable? He makes us happy. Are we dead! He is 'the resurrection and the life.' What a blessing is Christ Jesus! the greatest blessing, the best blessing that God has bestowed on man!

Then, thirdly, *What a difference there is between the first and the second Adam!* The first Adam ruined us—the second Adam restores us. The first Adam cast the ship upon the rock—the second Adam gets us off again, sets us afloat, and guides us into a secure haven. The first Adam traded with the capital of all his family, committed an act of terrible and universal bankruptcy, and bound all his seed in the ruins of that bankruptcy; but Jesus Christ has lent himself to the broken and dishonored family, to bring them back again to their former condition. The first Adam was at the head of the covenant of works—the second Adam is at the head of the covenant of grace. The first Adam brought a curse on us—the second Adam has brought us unspeakable blessings.

I remark, once more, *What an encouragement the words of the text are to the ministers of the Gospel!* I cannot say here what I might, under other circumstances. Suffice it to say to that man who wrote to me last night—not subscribing himself by his name, but by one of the characters I have been recently addressing from this desk, 'A backslider'—some man, I dare say within the range of my voice to-night, whom I know not, wrote me a note, and subscribed himself by that appellation. Just let me tell thee, O backslider, that Jesus is 'the resurrection.' If thou art dead, twice dead, plucked up by the roots, Jesus can make thee alive again. Oh, he says unto us poor ministers, whose breath is in our nostrils, who are here to-day and gone to-morrow,—he says, 'Go into the

valley of dry bones; and though the bones be dry, very dry, say unto them, Live, live!' Ah! is Jesus the resurrection of the dead? Then I go and stand in the valley, and cry, 'Live!' The silver trumpet of the Gospel has been blown, and great wonders have followed. Louder than the thunder of Sinai has been the sound of the Gospel that has stirred the bones into which Jesus has put his vivifying influence: the darkness of the human mind has been dispelled, the strong holds of the powers of darkness have been broken up, and the dead have come to life again. May God raise the spiritually-dead this night!

Lastly, *What consolation the text affords to those who are mourning over their dead!* Ah! we were some of us at the chamber of the mighty dead a few days since, depositing all that was mortal of him concerning whom we will now address you. I could then imagine that the bones of the dead lay mouldering on the mouth of the grave; and as I was taking them up and saying, Shall these dry bones live again?—will these come forth 'new rising from the tomb? methought I saw written on the lid of the coffin by the finger of the Son of God, 'I WILL RAISE HIM UP AT THE LAST DAY.' Dry your tears, beloved brethren; the dead shall live again.

I am truly sorry, on your account, that I have not had so much management of myself as to prevent me dilating this sermon to such an unusual and frightful disproportion, on an occasion of such interesting solemnity. I will now, my hearers, tell you of him of whose death I cannot speak as I would.

With the nation at large we have been called on to lament a very afflictive public bereavement, in the death of that great man and able minister, Dr. ADAM CLARKE,—a venerable and beloved servant of the Lord Jesus Christ, endeared to us by the valuable labors that crowded his public life, and further endeared to us all by the many virtues that adorned his private life—a life extended to threescore and ten years, that it might prove a blessing of the very first order to the past and present generations, and even, by its remote and posthumous influence, stretch to generations yet unborn. Our venerable friend, whose capacious energies had been directed to the welfare of mankind, has fallen asleep: he rests from his mighty and beneficent labors, and his works follow him. But we may well mourn his departure from among us; for the inscrutable event has overtaken us at a time when we looked not for it—when all our churches and people were looking with eager anticipation to the favor of his visits and services during the coming year—when it seemed certain to all, that much benefit to the Connexion at large, and to the interests of our common Christianity, was about to ensue—when he had actually come from his own house into town to commence another year's ministry amongst us, and a large con-

gregation had assembled to hear him—when his name was published from the pulpits of the city, announcing him to preach on this very day in one of them—when all was on the tip-toe of expectation—when his own mind had been pretty free from painful occurrences, that I know, during the past twelve months, had clouded the last year of his invaluable life—when all eyes and all hearts were turned towards him with a quickened impulse and enlarged desires. In these circumstances, how suddenly—in a moment—were our hopes blasted with the withering intelligence, that Dr. CLARKE was ill—dying—dead—buried! Solemn is the lesson imparted to us by the Supreme Ruler, in whose hand is the soul of every living thing and the breath of all mankind! Let us remember, that our times, all the circumstances of our being, are in the hand of God—that the number of our months is with him—that when the decree shall come forth, nothing shall be able to ward off the stroke of death, or to protract our existence a single moment.

The loss we have sustained is, indeed, unspeakable. It has created a void in our community and a chasm in our attachments which we can never hope to get supplied. He was not one of those ordinary men who may disappear from the stage of life without being missed or regretted beyond the circle of their private acquaintance, and whose place may be well filled up from among the circle which they leave behind them. It is not enough even to say, that he belonged to that more limited class whose abilities and education and influence have raised them above their brethren, and given them a superiority which few, comparatively, can ever expect to reach. He towered above us all in peerless and isolated grandeur, and held a station to which the most accomplished of us felt ourselves constrained to look up with reverence. He stood forth from among his contemporaries pre-eminent in strength of personal faculties and also of public character; and in his sway of intellectual power and greatness, he was like Saul among the men of Israel—head and shoulders higher than any of them all. His intellectual and moral worth won for him the respect and honor and reverence, which all men conceded to him. He occupied a place which nothing else could have enabled him to have acquired and afterwards maintain to his dying day. And we may affirm, that among those that can discern the things that differ—who know how to appreciate intellectual vigor, moral worth, honest independence, real learning, practical usefulness, disinterested generosity, and inflexible integrity, —there never was a man more highly and sincerely honored while he lived, or more deeply and deservedly lamented when he died.

To give any suitable delineation of him is a task to which I feel and confess my inadequacy. I knew him, and knew him well, and was privileged with his friendship. Some years ago, when my

local nearness to his own residence allowed it, I enjoyed much personal intercourse with him. My very knowledge of him satisfies me I cannot do justice to his memory ; I cannot speak of him as he ought to be spoken of ; I cannot speak of him as you will justly expect ; I cannot speak of him as my heart would fondly wish ; I cannot speak of him as others who have—I will not say, loved him more, but who have known him more, and who have powers more equal to the subject, will speak of him. This inability I regret the less, as his character, in all its aspects, was familiar to your minds. You knew him well—you loved him dearly—you venerated him highly : hundreds of you, under God, owe much to his ministry ; it has been unto you 'a savor of life unto life.' Many of you recognised him as your spiritual father ; you were converted under his zealous, faithful preaching. Many of your fathers and mothers he has visited in their sickness and attended on their dying beds. I hardly need to tell you this night his character ; it had, indeed, a length and breadth which made it obvious to all mankind ; it had nothing hidden or equivocal about it ; it was all wide, open, candid, and majestical. There was a magnanimity, a strength, a fulness, a freshness, an originality about his modes of thinking and acting, which were as eminent to the eye of observation as the lineaments of his face.

Dr. Clarke, as you have learned from the public papers, was born in Ireland, but his parents were natives of Great Britain—his father being, I believe, an Englishman, and his mother a Scotch-woman : I don't wonder that the whole of the three kingdoms claim him as their own. In a sermon which he preached in Derby, two or three years ago, from the words—'I am the light of the world : he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life,'—he observed, that before he heard the Methodist preachers, Adam Clarke was as stupid a lad as was any in the place: that, nevertheless, he was characterized by an insatiable thirst for learning ; and that after the light of the Gospel shone upon his mind, Adam Clarke could learn anything. It seems, that he was brought to God under the ministry of a methodist preacher of the name of Breedon. He became the subject of a sound, thorough, scriptural conversion ; how genuine and radical was that change, a life of uniform, practical, growing piety, covering over the space of more than half a century, is the delightful and triumphant witness. He soon afterwards was called of God to preach the gospel. This he revealed to his parents, having been brought under the notice of Mr. Wesley, by letter from Mr. Breedon, who saw that he was no common individual. His parents were strenuously, and for a considerable period, opposed to his convictions and wishes : but in this distressing perplexity, he received an intimation from Mr.

Wesley, that he must come over to England, go to Kingswood school, and see if there was anything he could learn; after that, Mr. Wesley would tell him what further was to be done.

Mr. CLARKE left his parents, and landing at Liverpool, proceeded immediately to Bristol, and safely arrived at Kingswood school. Owing to some error or neglect, the master was not duly apprised of his coming, and his reception was anything but cordial and agreeable. It was winter, and he was sent into a room to study alone, and without fire. Looking out of the window one day, he saw some men digging up the soil in the garden; and being much annoyed by the cold, he went down to try to warm himself by breaking the clods after the men. While thus employed he found half a guinea. He took it to Mr. Bailey, the head master—afterwards Dr. Bailey, of the Old Church at Manchester. One of the masters owned it, and after some time, this master came to Mr. Clarke with the half-guinea, saying, he had lost half a guinea and that that might be his; but whether it was or not, he was determined not to retain it; 'for,' said he, 'I have been quite miserable ever since I received it.' As no one would own the money, Mr. Clarke was obliged to retain it; and, perhaps, never half guinea did so much good as that half-guinea; for I heard him say, myself, that with that half-guinea he bought a few coals to warm himself with, and a few books, and those books oriental books; and that those few oriental books laid the foundation of his being all that he ever was as an oriental scholar.

He wrote by and by to Mr. Wesley, to say that there was nothing taught in the school which he did not know, and therefore wished to be informed what next was to be done. Mr. Wesley came to the school—had an interview with him—asked him certain questions—examined him concerning his experience, his views of scriptural doctrine, and then put the question, Whether or not he would become a minister in the Methodist Connexion? He paused, and then answered—If Mr. Wesley thought him worthy he was willing. Mr. Wesley paused; his countenance assumed an unusual heavenly placidity and radiance, there was solemn silence for some time between them; and at length Mr. Wesley rose from his seat, moved forward to Adam Clarke, and invoked upon him the blessing of Almighty God, that he would make him a successful minister of the New Testament.

He was then sent into Cornwall as an itinerant minister; and the intelligent people there welcomed this youthful evangelist, highly valued and greatly profited under his ministry, and predicted some of his subsequent eminence; and to this day, his name in that county is held absolutely sacred: and as I had opportunity—when in the spring I was on a tour through that part of the country—of witness-

ing, I found that everywhere his name was as ointment poured forth. At Launceston, which was one of the places he preached at, a persecutor of gigantic stature and rage, determined to take away the life of this zealous evangelist; and for this purpose filled his pockets with large stones, that he might, as he expressed it, 'dash out the brains' of the preacher. On arriving at the place with this awful intent, he found Mr. Clarke in his sermon, and he thought that, before he executed his purpose he would listen to a few words that the preacher was saying. He listened, and listened, and whilst listening, suddenly fell down as if he had been shot. He was convinced by the word, judged of all, and acknowledged that God was with the preacher. Mr. Clarke's life was saved, and the man's soul was saved! Glory be to God most high!

On his removal from that scene of toil, he was sent to the Norman isles of Guernsey and Jersey, and here he was truly and eminently a missionary. When about these islands he had much persecution; but he carried on his labors among those people, and was the means of the revival of religion at Guernsey; such prosperity crowning his labors, that a considerable society and a large congregation were raised by his influence, and a large chapel built, for which they were soon out of debt. The treatment he received here was most severe and violent, especially at St. Olives, where the house was frequently surrounded by a furious mob, and in one of their attacks it was nearly pulled to pieces. To himself the most violent indignities were offered, which even endangered his life. But the island was too strait for him, and he longed for a wider field in which to put forth the might of his energies, and to expatiate in all the fulness of his benevolence.

In addition to this craving after a more suitable and extensive sphere of action, he had considerable doubts as to the fairness of the manner in which his appointment had been brought about. This is quite apparent, and put beyond all doubt by his letter to Mr. King, one of the preachers with whom he had travelled on the Plymouth circuit, with whom he formed a most affectionate friendship and maintained a close correspondence for many years afterwards. Mr. Clarke disclosed his views to Mr. King, in the following letter—a letter for which I am obliged to the kindness of Mr. Toase, who is nephew to this same Mr. King, and has the whole of Mr. Clarke's letters which were written in this early period of his life to his attached friend. This is the very letter which was written by Mr. Clarke, and is dated 'Guernsey, Feb. 22, 1787.' After some introductory remarks, from which it should seem that Mr. Clarke had given an invitation to Mr. King to come over to Guernsey, and that an intimation had been given that he would visit the island, Mr. Clarke goes on—'Your first letter, I acknowledge,

buoyed me up with the hope of seeing you. With affection I have frequently mentioned it to our friends, who were taught to expect what I promised them as a blessing; but to my surprise, and perhaps their and my loss, we are all disappointed. Τὸ θέλημα τοῦ Κυρίου γένεσθω !*—There is still a friend that sticketh closer than the most affectionate brother. Glory be to his name, He is at present the portion of my soul, and, in my many trials, the lifter up of mine head. Through eternity I trust to praise him for what he has done for me, for whose unworthiness the widest extremes can have no parallel: on me salvation must shine with peculiar lustre.—On a review of your epistle, I can find many intentional, but very well expressed *ironia*. For instance—you say you have much work to do, and many other letters to write, which must take up much time. I have much work to do too, which, accompanied with frequent afflictions and temptations, have caused my body toacknowledge its weakness by sinking under it. Yet I could do more were I in a more enlarged sphere. As to my writing, it has generally been a curse to me; but my conscience acquits me of a single desire to write one letter, or hold any correspondence with any person, which is not necessary or for the glory of God. Yes, I find that in this, as in every other respect, it is full time to have done with all trifling. Oh, may Jesus more deeply teach me to do all I do to the glory of God !'—Now, here there is an ellipsis: he must be referring now to the contents of a letter from Mr. King on the subject of the unfairness or the fairness of his appointment by the Conference to Guernsey. 'It may be so, my brother; but still I am induced to scruple my appointment as the immediate result of the Divine counsels. Had Mr. Wesley appointed me, it is probable I should have had little doubt concerning the matter; but I have been credibly informed by Mr. Day, that Mr. Wesley had no hand in the affair. But I bless God I neither murmur nor repine—yea, what is more, am far from desiring to leave it; I am heartily willing to stay, whatever privileges I am obliged to relinquish, as long as God sees meet to detain me. Glory be to thee, O Lord most high! That he has blessed and is blessing my labor, is a truth for which I can never be sufficiently grateful: yet still this is no proof that he would not have prospered me more abundantly in a situation where I should have had ten times the ground to sow the seed of life in. But this shall work eventually for my good. And never did I so comprehend what is implied in watching over souls, as I do now. Before, having two or three preachers always with me, we all shared the labor and concern; I had less burdens to bear; but here, I may truly say, I stand alone; every load falls on my shoul-

*'The will of the Lord be done.'

der, very incapable of bearing it; and my feelings are so increased, and my concern so deepened to get eternal souls brought to and kept with Jesus, that any backsliding among the people is a sword to my soul, and gives me some of the most poignant sensations." He then goes on to say, "My language is incapable of describing facts as they are, and I must cease. Here I stand—God help me! My brother, rush into every place; there call—O call immortal perishing souls back to God! How should my soul triumph to have such towns here to introduce the gospel in, as are vacant in your circuit! I now see, more than I did, how I am straitened; and being so circumscribed, my soul earnestly desires to be more useful." There you see the man and the workings of his mind. It seems that his friend, Mr. King, so far sympathized with him as to write to Mr. Wesley, and state the views of Mr. Clarke; and I hold in my hand the letter which was written by Mr. Wesley to Mr. King on this very subject. Here is the letter written by Mr. Wesley, from Ireland, to Mr. King; and you will see what Mr. Wesley's opinion of Adam Clarke was, almost fifty years ago. "Athlone, April 21, 1787. My dear brother,—Adam Clarke is doubtless an extraordinary young man, and capable of doing much good; therefore Satan will shorten his course if possible, and this is very likely to be done by his still preaching too loud or too long. It is a sure way of cutting his own throat. Whenever you write, warn him of this; it may be he will take advice before it be too late. He may have work enough to do if he adds the isle of Alderney to those of Guernsey and Jersey. If you have a desire to go and be with him, you may, up to the conference. At that time I expect they will have both work and food for another laborer."

Now here is a part of Mr. Clarke's letter to Mr. King, in reference to this communication of Mr. Wesley. This small scrap contains both Mr. Clarke's and Mr. Wesley's letter; for Mr. Wesley's letter got into the hands of Mr. Clarke; and as Mr. Clarke was then going to sail for the island, and had reason to suppose that the letter for Mr. King referred to himself,—he having a particular intimacy with Mr. King,—opened the letter, and found what Mr. Wesley said here. "It seems from the contents, that you have been saying something to Mr. Wesley on my affairs, which I did not desire. However it is an evidence of your sincere friendship. May the kind Lord give me what I possess not, and increase in me that which, in a measure, already exists! I find Mr. Wesley is willing you should come to the island, if you please. Were I to stay here your presence would be a pleasure to my soul and body; but should my kind brother suffer in consequence of his affection for me, I know not what to say. If I stay, I pray God to send Mr. King to labor with me, if it be not injurious to his welfare; but otherwise I cannot desire it."

Well, since Guernsey and Jersey were too small a circuit for this young man, he proceeded to make the annexation of the isle of Alder-

ney. It is a little curious, that last evening, about this time, I received the letter I referred to, written by "A backslider;" and while I was actually upon the very part about the doctor going to Alderney, a letter came to my house from a person giving me a history of his introduction into Alderney. Here it is:—

"Permit the writer to say, that he has been acquainted with the Old Arminian Methodist church for forty-eight years; wherefore he remembers the late most excellent and truly devout man of God, Adam Clarke, in early life. And give me leave to observe, that a few years after he became a preacher, he was appointed for Jersey and Guernsey. While Mr. Clarke was at Jersey, it was impressed on his mind to visit Alderney; but this place being at this time peopled by outlaws, no mariner could be found who would trust this virtuous young apostle to the mercy of such miscreants. Mr. Clarke, being under the influence and direction of the Holy Ghost, determined on paying them a visit. He got a passage in a smuggler's boat, from which he was landed safely on the isle of Alderney; but knowing no one on the island, he for some time roamed about, with a heart truly devoted to the work in which he was embarked. At last, placing his eye on a little cottage, he ventured to enter it with the promise of his Master, Christ Jesus the Lord, 'Peace be to this house!'"

Well, Mr. Clarke, in writing to Mr. Wesley, observes that the same little house was inhabited by an aged man and woman, the latter of whom understood his mission, and, like the Shunamite, perceiving that he was a man of God, showed him to an "upper room on the wall, where there was a bed, a table, a stool, and a candlestick." Here Mr. Clarke, the good man, and his wife, spent a short time in prayer, when he prevailed on them to publish that it was his intention to preach. Around him they gathered, and he truly unfolded the gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; when many, being convinced of sin, were constrained to cry out for mercy; and many, gratified with the doctrine delivered, cleared out a large store-room, where he delivered to them his second sermon. On leaving the island, he was followed by the people, entreating him to stay with them, or shortly to return, or send one like himself; for they needed such preaching. Further, Mr. Clarke adds, in his letter to Mr. Wesley, that there was no minister on the island but an old French Roman Catholic priest, who cared nothing for the souls of the people; and here, in early life, Mr. Clarke was made the sole instrument of establishing a society in that place, which hell and death have never yet been able to prevail against. God be thanked, and of his infinite mercy grant, that the death of this eminent man may be the occasion of the resurrection of the soul of the man who wrote me that letter!

It seems that his preaching extempore was considered, in the island, as a phenomenon; and on one occasion the governor heard him on the

stairs, and at the conclusion of the service, politely requested him to allow him to see his Bible—fully expecting to find his sermon enclosed in it. He found it a simple Bible, without note or comment; and returning it to the preacher, expressed his pleasure at having heard the discourse.

I hold in my hand a copy of an extract from one of his letters to Mr. King, from Guernsey. He says, "Here I am determined, by the grace of God, to conquer and die; and have taken the subsequent for a motto, and have it placed before me on the mantel-piece." It is a Greek sentence, the meaning of which is, "Stand thou as a beaten anvil to the stroke; for it is the property of a good warrior to be flayed alive, and yet to conquer." That was the motto of Dr. Clarke's life.

Having fulfilled his mission, he was removed: and now the scene widened before him, and the whole length and breadth of England and Ireland laid at his feet. As it is impossible I can continue this narrative, I shall merely say that God gave him, henceforth, his heart's desire. He had now a noble and spacious theatre of action for the play of his faculties; and it must now be pleasing to observe, that all the way from the Norman Isles in the south to the Shetlands in the extreme north, he has diffused the savor of the knowledge of Christ; and all along—from one extremity of the British islands to the other, taking Britain itself as a centre—he has left a track of light and glory behind him. In what great division of the country has he not been? and where has he been and has not left the print of his feet, a memorial of his genuine piety, and acknowledgment of his sterling worth, the sweet odor of his name? The whole land is mourning for him: this day his name has been on myriads of lips since this morning's sun appeared above the horizon. What portion of the people is there not sighing to think that he is no more—that the wind has passed over him and he is gone? Oh, my heart is sad! I will not—I must not—I dare not utter all that I feel. Oh, thou great and gracious God, teach us to bow meekly before thee, and to profit greatly by this most stunning blow of thine hand!

What did I say?—that Great Britain and Ireland formed the theatre of his usefulness? It was a great mistake: all over the United States of America he is read, and studied, and felt, and all but seen and heard by the germinating mind of that new and teeming hemisphere. No wonder that its chief men should send an invitation to him to come and see their shores, as the last "*Christian Advocate*" so beautifully tells us,—that he may go and tread their shores, and visit their pulpits, and bless their youth, and lift up his honored head among their rising schools and colleges; and by showing them ADAM CLARKE, let them see what a thinking head and a diligent hand a gracious heart can bring forth, under the divine blessing. But what a shock is now vibrating towards that land! How will they grieve—not that they shall

see him no more; but that they shall never see him at all! In Germany, as I was told by a learned friend and a great traveller, who was present at his funeral, he will be lamented as much as in this country—that he is beyond measure respected and revered there, his works having revealed and praised him in their gates. When I think on these things—when I look back on the course he has thus so long and so splendidly pursued—when I reflect on the rectitude and gentleness of his doings, as a ruler in our Israel—when I call to mind that his single object was to advance the power of religion in every part of the land, and to render Methodism its chief blessing, safeguard and glory—when I call to mind his unparalleled pleadings for the thousand charities among us—when I know that he drew over to our society individuals of station and exalted character, that the fame of no other than his name could attract—when I remember that he had set his heart on the conversion of all men, and how dear that object was to his benevolent mind, and how vigorously, and steadfastly, and triumphantly he worked for its accomplishment—when I think how wise, and good, and great he was—and then, when I bethink myself of the melancholy fact, that he has been taken away, hurried away out of the land of the living, and that we shall see his face no more, behold his form, and hear and profit by his discourse no more,—I am amazed and very heavy. When I remember those words that he uttered in the last Conference on the first day,—"I am the father of the Conference, and you cannot help yourselves,"—words which are now ringing in my ears and thrilling through my heart—how can I believe that he is gone? And yet, gone, gone, gone from us he is! and I can only exclaim, as Elisha did, when, with sorrow and surprise, he saw Elijah carried from him into heaven, "My father, my father, the chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof!"—But I must go on.

In his conduct amongst men he was remarkably plain and manly—natural, simple, honest, ingenuous and unaffected. His conversation was pleasing and lovely, not learned, except when circumstances so combined as to render it a duty to give it that particular character. He never pretended to refinement, though he was eminently affable and polite, and disclosed by his manner the effect of that intercourse which he, more than any other man who ever bore the appellation of Methodist, actually had with what is usually called good society and exalted rank: all who approached him felt the indefinable but irresistible fascination which such intercourse never fails to produce on a nature like his.

The excellences of his sentiments were not drawn from exterior embellishments, their character not needing the aid of foreign ornament, but were, "when unadorned, adorned the most." From his extended and unbounded acquaintance with the religious world, and from his access to every walk of life, his information was universal. As his discourse combined the agreeable with the edifying, he was listened to with delight. He was the very reverse of moroseness, as every

body knows; his heart was the region of cheerfulness, and on his tongue was the law of kindness. Warm in his friendships, none could surpass him in sympathy for his afflicted people and suffering friends, or his possession of sentiments of participation in their joys. In fine—the spirit, influence and virtues of Christianity uniformly diffused over his character a serene splendor—adorned and imbued his whole behavior. His fine intellectual and commanding mien, together with the natural and easy manner, that seemed to pervade him like an atmosphere, were particularly prepossessing and delightful; and perhaps it was impossible for any person, however uninfluenced by religion, to experience disgust or to feel uneasy in his company; for the heart that did not vibrate to his, felt constrained to pay homage to his superior greatness and unaffected goodness.

But you expect me to speak of him as a preacher. On this I am aware some will differ from me. I consider him to have been pre-eminently great, and that he occupied a field of religious eloquence altogether and exclusively his own. The whole kingdom has acknowledged the sway of his master mind as a teacher of the people. The truths of revelation received a coloring and flew forth from his skilful hands with an energy that secured the attention, admiration and reverence of myriads, and the actual reception and personal belief of thousands. He took up the precious ore as it lay in its original bed; and by such a disposition of its several parts, and such a powerful handling of it, as a whole, compelled myriads to acknowledge its heavenly worth and origin, and to sink, and flinch, and quiver, under its searching power. His manner of preaching was, beyond all comparison, authoritative and forceful; and no one could listen to him without being assured that he was as certain of the truth of what he was enforcing as of his own existence. He spoke in the fulness of his heart, and delivered, with the earnestness of a messenger of God, that which he had received from the Lord Jesus Christ.

There was, in his preaching, not only intellectual perception, but also the power of moral suasion; and his hearers were made sensible of it; they felt that he and his subject were one—that his being was possessed of it—and that it was twined and intertwined, laced and interlaced with the very essence of his nature—that they might cut off his right arm, but that nothing could separate him and his faith. It was this air of authority in which his message was steeped, that made it altogether his own, and perfectly unique. He demonstrated and expounded, perhaps, as much as any uninspired man ever did, how the truth was as it was, and that it could not but be so. He conveyed the knowledge of it and commended the testimony of it to every man's conscience; and with his mighty galvanic battery of logical argumentation, stormed the citadel of many a proud and lofty spirit, and gained a lodgment for the heavenly message. He made the truth flash forth its own evidence; so that you saw its coruscations and felt its weight.

This gave his addresses the momentum, the penetration and the force which it is difficult to describe to one who never heard him, and impossible to conceive.

But, after all, I think it will be admitted, that the great and prominent characteristic of his preaching, was the high degree of unction that generally pervaded it; hence it was that a sermon of Dr. Clarke's was universally looked forward to, by the people, as a feast—a spiritual banquet—as food into which, as into that of Elijah, on one occasion, a heavenly seasoning was transfused, so that the receiver could go on in the strength of the meal for many days. It was this that made the word of the Lord so precious. From his lips the gospel came, not distinguished by its authority alone, but also by its fragrance. In fact, to hear the doctor was regarded by multitudes of sensible pious people, as the greatest treat of their lives. Some years since, when coming from the pulpit stairs, after preaching before the Conference, the subject having been the account of Barnabas, Mr. Miller stepped forward, flung his arms round his neck, wept a flood of tears, and said, "Bless you!—you are a man of God, full of faith, and full of the Holy Ghost." We know that by his labors much people were added to the Lord: his ministry is thought to have been more successful than that of any of his companions, except Mr. Benson's, and not less than his; and certainly was more successful than that of any minister now living, unless we except the Rev. Rowland Hill, who has had some fifteen years more of public life and labor than he had.

The interest that his visits in any part of the provinces excited was prodigious, and will by and by become incredible. And here it must be sufficient to say, that during the greater part of his life, down to the last closing day, he could, in any city, town, or village in England or Ireland, have filled and crowded the largest chapel, on the morning of any week day of the six: and as to his collections, every body knows there was a marked difference between their amount and those of the most talented and eloquent of his coadjutors.

For several years he has been regarded with far more reverence than is ordinarily felt by a people towards an established and able minister. His high character—his extended reputation—his achievement of an elaborate and imperial Commentary on the Holy Scriptures, with the accurate meaning of which it was presumed he was acquainted, above the lot of his own coevals and brethren in general—his venerable, grand and apostolic appearance—the unfaded freshness of mind which he retained through a long life of ministerial greatness—his title to some of the most distinguished honors in the aristocracy of letters—with many other considerations, which I cannot touch upon,—gave to his name, and person, and ministry a popularity whose volume and depth distinguished it from that of any other, even the most acknowledged and distinguished men amongst us.

But he is not merely to be considered as a Methodist, though his

attachment to Methodism never knew any diminution; and towards the people his affection was maintained, through evil and through good report, unaltered, and, we believe, undiminished to the last. But as he was the very antipodes of bigotry and sectarianism, he took a lively interest in every thing affecting the fortune, and condition, and prosperity, and destiny of the church of Christ. A more expansive and generous mind we know not. His judgment of his brethren was never harsh or severe; and he was always ready to put the best construction on their sayings and doings which truth and justice would admit, and almost more than that. His kindly feeling towards his brethren and mankind at large, it has been thought, he carried to excess; but he knew more men and more of men than most: and the result of his extended commerce with liberal and opposing parties was that his love to all was increased—the never-failing effect of travel being to rub off the austerities, to dilate the contractions, to diminish the selfishness, which are found to hang about all men who live within the narrow limits of some nut-shell locality.

As a patriot and citizen he is entitled to honorable mention, having an ardent love of the constitution and the king, and regarding the liberty and independence of the people as their birthright and their glory. And though he meddled with politics much less than some of his brethren, he was never indifferent to any thing that bore, directly or indirectly, upon the weal or the wo of this great empire, which he longed to see filled with knowledge and righteousness. He felt an interest in the welfare of all countries as well as his own, because he felt that every man was his brother, and that every man might be saved. He therefore looked forward to the time when the errors and delusions of Satan would come to an end—when ignorance, cruelty, slavery and war should be expelled the world—when the beauty of holiness should fill every region, and the sound of salvation float on every breeze. Vast and unbounded was the extent of his labors for the accomplishment of this consummation. Many of his mightiest physical efforts in the cause of the renovation of the world, have been the sermons he delivered on behalf of the Missionary Society. In him the heathen have lost a friend, whose advocacy of their cause was crowned with unparalleled success.

His great and primary distinction was a clear, and searching, and profound, and powerful understanding, which apprehended speedily, and seized eagerly, and discriminated sagaciously on the merits of any subject, in all its various issues and complex relations; and which advanced to its decision with unhesitating promptitude and unflinching firmness. His learning was immense; and being all devoted to benevolent ends, it stamped on his life and character an interest of the most exalted order. He was generally taken to be one of the most learned men of this age, or of any other since the fall of man. His acquaintance with languages and dialects, living and dead, was prodigious, and considering the active life he was compelled to lead, scarcely credible. His accumu-

lation of all knowledge was to an astonishing amount, as much, perhaps, as any man; he was an encyclopædia of all knowledge. His mind was a garden of deep and rich things, in the soil of which actual creations took place, and whose growths exhibited at once the freshness of spring, the beauty of summer, and the plenty of autumn, where the chills and barrenness of winter were never known. Yet that same mind was a laboratory, into which knowledge without measure was brought from every kingdom of nature, and all the labyrinths of history, and all the wells of literature, and all the depths of philosophy, and especially from that great and endless dell—human nature, in which they were all subjected to the processes of a gigantic apparatus of mental chemistry; and the results of the whole were deposited in the spacious receivers and unnumbered cavities, where, whenever called for, they were ready to be run off to serve the grand purposes of the Almighty, in the firmament of the physical, moral and spiritual improvement of the species.

Nor can I suffer this occasion to pass without stating my opinion of that *chef d'œuvre* of his laborious hand—I mean his *Commentary on the Scriptures*. His labors, in that respect, were those of a miner; he separated each portion of metal from its adjacent mass—assayed, weighed, measured, tested every sentiment, word, article, accent, point, and sound of the sacred treasure; and then fearlessly, manfully, unequivocally and truthfully recorded, in the fear of God, his conviction of the meaning of the written Word. And, as I have said, he was an encyclopædia of letters and knowledge, so his Commentary is an encyclopædia of biblical science and learning, and will be remembered longer than the Egyptian pyramids, and stand a mighty, Alpine monument of the wisdom, piety, benevolence, zeal, Herculean labor, indefatigable industry, and immense application of its gifted, and distinguished, and ennobled, and illustrious author. As to the few peculiarities of opinion, on account of which the work has been, by some, attempted to be disparaged, they do not affect any essential, leading doctrine of religion: and we affirm, that no other commentator, in this or any other country, has taught and established more clearly, and pointedly, and forcefully, the fall and depravity of human nature—the redemption by Christ Jesus—the efficacy and extent of the atonement—the justification of the sinner by faith in that atonement—the necessity and reality of the influence of the Holy Ghost—and the entire sanctification of the whole man, than he who, though "dead, yet speaketh." By his labors he has not only cleared the ground, filled up the ditches, and smoothed the roads; but drained, planted, sowed, and watered the surface of the country. The press, as well as the pulpit, was the great weapon of his warfare; and it might be said of him as it was said of Luther, "He had thought, matter and mind for all that he did."

I am aware that this eminent man has been much blamed for broaching any opinions—however light they may be and comparatively insignificant—which are not generally received and avowed by the body to which he belonged, and to which he was ever proud to belong. I confess, that, though I am not one of those that adopted these opinions, yet I always admired and confided in, and venerated the character of the doctor the more and yet the more, for his unflinching, uncompromising, unprevaricating honesty and faithfulness in this matter. He had undertaken and had announced himself to the world in and under the character of a commentator on the Bible; and this being the case, it was not optional for him to withhold his deliberate sentiments on any portion of the volume. He had voluntarily engaged—but solemnly and bindingly engaged—to give the sense and meaning, as he understood it, and as far as he understood it, of the Scriptures, and of the whole Scriptures. He fulfilled his engagement; and he had the rare good fortune and the transcendent honor of finishing and giving to the world, a learned, pious, critical, colossal and honest Commentary on the entire books of the Old and New Testament Scriptures, which is found alike on the shop-board of the mechanic and in the cabinet of the learned—on the shelf of the poor man's cottage and in the libraries of the kings and princes of the earth.

I had written thus far when the time of night summoned me into this place. I might go on a great way, but you, I am sure, are anxious I should close.

I am aware you will say, "Well—had he no faults?" O yes, to be sure he had; for he was a man, and not an angel—a saved sinner, and not an immaculate, impeccable creature. Faults! It has been said that he was dogmatical. Well, and so he was; and so is every man that has the power of mind, and the mass of learning, and the station and the character which he had. Dogmatical! Why, Dr. Parr was dogmatical—Dr. Johnson was dogmatical—John Wesley was dogmatical; and every great, learned and illustrious man may be said to be somewhat dogmatical. The sun is very dogmatical in the dog-days, when it pours its irradiations on the head of a man that is travelling. The lightning is very dogmatical when it strikes and scathes the stately oak. The flood is very dogmatical when it plunges, and dashes, and puts forth its powerful influence to find its level.

It has been said he was obstinate. Obstinate! Why, in the granite of his noble mind, some of the granulations may have been flinty and adamantine; but you will observe, that firmness is often mistaken for obstinacy; and that every man who stands on the eminence which he stood on, is obliged to be firm to a degree that sometimes does border on obstinacy. It has been said that he was eccentric. Why, yes, indeed; and so would you be if you had a decimal fraction of the strength and originality of his astonishing mass of learning. It

has been said, that he was not eloquent. Eloquent! Why, there is a sort of eloquence that he had: but any man may be eloquent who has got a flood of feeling in his soul, and intelligence in his head, and independence in his thoughts, and volubility in his tongue. But it is not every eloquent man that could think, or say, or do as he did. His attainments were lifted far up above the mere character of eloquence and refinement of taste.

I gave it before as my own opinion, that at the moment of his death he occupied a larger space in the public eye, and a deeper lodgment in the public heart, not only of the eminent communion to which for fifty years he belonged, but of all the living Christianity now found upon the globe. In losing him we seem as if a great river had been dried up—as if a sun had been quenched—as if a lighthouse had been upset in the midst of the ocean. Our loss is great; but his gain is vastly greater.

To my own mind, it is beyond all measure affecting, that the last Sunday evening I preached in this place, it was a funeral sermon for the late Mr. Storry, whom I had interred in the adjoining ground that afternoon, and who had died but the day before! Then we considered and lamented the death of an eminent Christian, and an able and successful minister of the New Testament. We were struck with the suddenness of the loss and separation in that case; and we came and glorified God in him whose holy life and useful labors had been brought to an abrupt close. We then put into the mouth of that much-loved servant of the Saviour, the precious testimony of the apostle, "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day." I was then filled with the conviction, that it was my duty to go to Liverpool. A few hours after I left this pulpit, I was on my way there, to discharge what I felt, be it right or wrong, a debt to Dr. CLARKE and the Methodist connexion. My manner of discharging that, no doubt, was exceedingly faulty, as is my manner of doing every thing I attempt to do; but that I did it then—that I did it at all—affords me the highest satisfaction of any public event of my life. Down to the last day of my existence I must look back upon the attempt—upon the motives that prompted me, with the approbation of my mind. I have lived long enough to know that self-reproach is an infinitely greater calamity than any other reproach except the reproach of the Almighty.

And now, my friends, to Him that liveth and reigneth—to Him that made the departed individual what he was—to Him that connected his labors with this church—to the only wise God—Him alone who hath immortality,—be honor, and glory, and might, and majesty, and dominion forever and ever! Amen.

EXTRACT FROM A SERMON

Delivered at the City Road Chapel, London, May 27, 1832.

BY THE REV. RICHARD WATSON.

'Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil.' HEB. vi. 19.

AFTER directing our attention to 'that within the veil,' which may be considered both the ground and the object of the believer's hope, viz. the special manifestation of God, the priesthood of Christ, the union of the three persons in the blessed Trinity, in the grand work of our redemption, the special gifts and operations of the spirit constituting that fulness of spiritual blessings in the heavenly places in Jesus Christ, which we are taught to expect, the author observes :—

'But there are other scenes which, if not the ground of our hope, are at least the delightful objects of it. In a verse, which follows the text, there is an expression of great emphasis, "Whither," says the apostle, "the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus." Well, then, if Christ is the forerunner, necessarily others have followed him within the veil. All the apostles have passed within the veil—all the first disciples, who followed him through the reproaches and persecutions of the first ages, have passed within the veil; all, in point of fact, from that time to the present who have died in the faith, have gone with our Forerunner within the veil. Here there is a scene for hope to fix upon; and, surely, if we enter there and behold the multitude which no man can number, we may be cheered with the songs and inspired with the glorious scenes of the heavenly sanctuary, and be encouraged to pass through the various troubles and exercises of the present state, when we see that the way to the holiest is made perfect, and that we may follow those who have entered within the veil, and are now within the veil; for there is everything in that sight to encourage us. Their very multitude—

which it is said no man can number—what speaks it? but the extent of the Divine mercy—the riches and the power of Divine grace; proving that God willeth not any to be lost, but will have all men to be saved—demonstrating to us that his designs are vast and extensive, and not narrow and confined; so that it is the fault of every human being that is lost, and his own fault alone that he enters not there. Consider, too, the cheering fact, that this multitude is not a multitude of angels that have kept their first estate, but a multitude of men—persons who have passed from this earth to heaven, through the same track which is still marked out for us, and in which we must travel till we enter there; they were not innocent men but sinners who had to wash their robes and make them white in the blood of the Lamb, and some of them among the guiltiest; yet, through the merit of the atonement and the sanctifying power of grace, they are there. They were taken from the same walks of life as ourselves—from the walks of business—from the threatening paths of sickness and of sorrow and humiliation, and even contempt frequently—out of every nation and kindred and tongue and people, and out of every language and clime; yet, notwithstanding that they moved precisely in the same circumstances in which we now move, and were apparently, as far distant as we, to all external appearance, from glory, honor, and immortality,—they are now within the veil. Yes, and they had the same spiritual conflicts—they had to pass through, not only the same scenes of sorrow, but through the same snares and temptations and dangers —they had the same depressions. Do you feel as though you should sometimes faint and grow weary? So did they; but they are there. Do you sometimes say, I shall one day fall by the hand of my enemy? They, too, had often said it—yet they are now where the enemy cannot reach them. Do you shudder occasionally when you think of entering on the dark and gloomy valley of the shadow of death? So did they too. Many an occasional fear and alarm shook for the time their faith, but still they entered by faith and hope within the veil, and they are now there! Oh, my brethren, when we consider these demonstrations of the efficacy of Divine grace—when we look within the veil and discover that all things are possible for man, in the exercise of a simple faith and a lively hope—that it is possible for him to hold on his way amidst opposition and through temptation—that it is possible for him to trample under foot, even the power of the enemy and all the fears of death itself, and even enter into the presence of God and be an inhabitant with Christ within the veil,—well may hope, discovering such scenes, fly for refuge and take hold on objects so exciting and so encouraging, and preserve the soul, amidst the storms of life, sure and stedfast!

'There are, however, two or three PRACTICAL LESSONS which we may learn from this subject: and the first is, the *necessity of flying for refuge, as the apostle has it, to lay hold on this hope.* How many of you are out of this refuge—how many of you have lived, that is to say, without repentance towards God, without a saving faith in Christ, without a sense of forgiveness and acceptance, still in the spirit of the word and under the dominion of your senses, and therefore out of this refuge? And to what does the apostle compare your condition? As I have said, to a frail bark in the mighty ocean, exposed to a raging tempest, when there is no port to flee to, and when, of course, the vessel must necessarily, in such a case, under the continual and heightening rage of the storm, be ultimately lost. Perhaps you hear no tempest at present—all appears smooth and calm—you give your sails to the wind and you unfold your streamers in the sun, and you think you shall outrun the storms of life, and you cry, "peace and safety," and wonder at all these alarming declarations as to a coming destruction. Many have presumed, before you, till the floods of their ungodliness have risen against them and made them afraid. What! are you never to die? Are you never to be brought to look narrowly and at hand upon eternity? Are you never to be judged? Are you never to see the final scene of this world's desolation? Are you never to behold the Saviour, whom you have slighted, coming in his glory, and in that of his Father—no longer to administer grace, but to take vengeance on them that know him not and that reject the Gospel? These are the scenes you must witness—these are the storms that will arise; and when they have arisen, if you have neglected in time to fly unto this refuge, then, brethren, let it be observed, in such moments, there can possibly be no relief. Be persuaded, then, of the necessity there is of entering into this refuge now—the necessity of putting your souls out of the reach of hazard: you ought not, indeed, to live another moment without taking this great and all-important step. Then, indeed, if you flee to the mercy of God in Christ—if you obtain the sense of acceptance with him—if you have the blessed assurance that you are his—if you are conscious that you have given up your whole heart to God, then you may rest and be at peace—all is well, whatever your external circumstances may be. And, oh, it is the greatest madness and infatuation for an immortal man, treading on the brink of death, and liable every moment to be swept away by the vengeance of Almighty God and banished forever from his presence,—to endanger his greatest interests, to rest contented and secure whilst he is liable to this condemnation! Oh, flee to the refuge and make an effort to lay hold on it!

'Secondly: *Let those persons who have entered the refuge feel the*

duty they owe to others who are still out of it. The apostle dwells on this particularly. Brethren, if you have escaped the storm—if you are in the port and feel your security through the mercy of God, you are to cultivate the greatest sympathy for those who are still laboring under that same infatuation from which the mercy of God has saved you; and you are to endeavor to save others; "Be ye," therefore, says St. Paul, "blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life." There he makes reference to the kindling of a light on the entrance to a harbor in a dark night, in order to guide the vessels thither that were in danger of being lost in the storm. It is the duty of a Christian, having found the port himself, to be a guide to others in danger; and, in order to this, he will at once take care of his words, of his walk, and his example. He must be blameless and harmless—a son of God without rebuke.

'*Let those who have entered into this port and feel themselves at anchor there, be prepared for storms;* nor let them have the idea that they are yet wholly secure and stable. Even at anchor a storm may arise. If the anchor, or the anchor and cable be frail, the vessel may be driven from her anchorage and still be ultimately wrecked. Brethren, in your case the anchorage can never fail—the ground beneath, into which hope casts her anchor, can never fail—it is immutable ground—the two immutable things of which the apostle speaks. If you grasp fast on the immutability of God by faith and hope, it can never deceive you; but the cable may be bad—your faith and hope may fail: unless you take care of your faith and hope, you are in danger too. Now, my friends, the great business of our life, having entered into this friendly port and cast anchor there—to drop the figure, having laid hold by our faith and hope on the immutable promise of God, is to take care that our faith and hope do not fail. And what shall strengthen our faith and hope continually, but thus entering into that which is within the veil, of which our text speaks? Everything depends on that. Let us be spiritually-minded, then; let our thoughts be frequently within the veil. This is a subject, brethren, which we ought to revolve in our minds continually—watching against all distraction—casting out of our spirits that which is low and trifling, and keeping all the great realities constantly before us, of which we have been already speaking. And not merely are our thoughts to be exercised with subjects of that sort—not merely are they to be the prevalent thoughts of our breasts—not merely are we to keep them continually before us if we would be safe; but we are to make, what I may call, realizing efforts as to them. There is much implied in that expression of the apostle—"*laying hold.*" Our faith

is to be renewed continually in its liveliest actings, in its efforts of entire dependence on Christ—claiming through his merit the fulness of his blessings, and our hope is to fix on all those great and blessed prospects which the mercy of God in Christ presents to us; that so having a lively hope, that is, a hope that shall invigorate and support us, it may also be a hope that shall sanctify us; for "he that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself even as Christ is pure."

'And we are called by everything to these blessed exercises—by the vanity of earth which will not satisfy our spirits—by the changes of earth which take away our substance from us, and leave us poor indeed if we have no riches laid up in heaven—by the testimony of God's word and the ordinances he has appointed, the great object of which is to reveal these things to us in their greatness and glory, to cultivate in us spiritual mindedness, cause us to enter within the veil and to fix our affections on these subjects. Let us make it, then, the great object of life to exercise our thoughts on those things that belong to our peace—to receive those blessed promises, and to plead for their accomplishment in our personal experience—looking forward to the communication of still greater blessings; until at last we enter within the veil—until our spirits, I mean, do literally enter and behold and enjoy there Christ and God forever and ever. May God grant us this grace, for Christ's sake! Amen.'

The following admirable lines from the gifted pen of Mrs. SIGOURNEY, the sweet singer in our American Israel, will be read with feelings of mournful pleasure by all who retain a high respect for the memory of Dr ADAM CLARKE.—ED.

[To the Editor of the New England Christian Herald:]

SIR—I send for the columns of your paper, a brief tribute to the memory of Dr. ADAM CLARKE, one of the greatest men which our own age, or any other age of the world has produced.

Respectfully,

L. H. SIGOURNEY.

Hartford, Feb. 1, 1833.

ON THE DEATH OF DR. ADAM CLARKE.

Know ye a prince hath fallen? They who set
On gilded throne, with rubied diadem,
Caparison'd and guarded round, till Death
Doth stretch them 'neath some gorgeous canopy,—
Yet leave no foot-prints in the realm of mind,
Call them not *kings*,—they are but *crowned men*.—
——Know ye a prince hath fallen?—Nature gave
The signet of her royalty,—and years
Of mighty labor won that sceptred power
Of Knowledge, which from unborn ages claims
Homage and empire, such as time's keen tooth
May never waste.—Yea,—and the grace of God
So witness'd with his spirit, so impell'd
To deeds of Christian love,—that there is rear'd
A monument for him, which hath no dread
Of that fierce flame that wrecks the solid earth—
——I see him 'mid the Shetlands, spreading forth
The riches of the Gospel,—kneeling down
To light its lamp in every darken'd hut;
Not in the armor of proud learning brac'd,
But with a towel girded, as to wash
The feet of those, whom haughty princes scorn.—
I see him lead the rugged Islander
Even as a brother,—to the Lamb of God,—
Counting his untaught soul more precious far
Than all the ore of all the letter'd world —
——I hear his eloquence,—but deeper still,
And far more eloquent, there comes a dirge
O'er the wild wave,—'All that ye boast of man,
Is as the flower of grass.'

Farewell!—farewell!—
Pass on with Wesley, and with all the great
And good of every nation,—yea!—pass on
Where the cold name of sect, which sometimes throws
Unholy shadow o'er the heaven warm'd breast,
Doth melt to nothingness,—and every surge
Of warring doctrine, in whose eddying depths
Earth's charity was drown'd,—is sweetly lost
In the broad ocean of Eternal Love.

By Mrs. L. H. Sigourney.

SERMON XVII.

THE SACREDNESS OF THE LORD'S TEMPLE.

Delivered at the Dedication of the Second Methodist Episcopal Church in Duxbury, Mass. October 22, 1832.

BY REV. BENJAMIN F. LAMBORD
OF THE NEW ENGLAND CONFERENCE.

'The Lord is in his holy temple, let all the earth keep silence before him.' HABAKKUK ii. 20.

IT has been customary from time immemorial to consecrate those places to the special service of Jehovah, which he has condescended to honor with his glorious presence. This practice has prevailed in the rude, as well as in the refined periods of society. The patriarchs erected altars to God, on certain sacred spots where he had revealed his glory. The Israelites in the wilderness had their tabernacles in which the Shekinah resided; and after they were conducted to Jerusalem, they invoked his benediction by appropriate and acceptable services, in that august temple erected to him by Solomon. This was the first temple consecrated by human instrumentality to the true God. There was no place so awful, for it was the only sacred enclosure whence acceptable services could be presented to God. Hither the Israelites from every quarter were obliged to centre for divine worship. Although captives in Babylon, Jerusalem and her temple were alternately the fruitful source of their pleasure and grief, and the object of their most ardent devotions. A striking exemplification of this truth we have in the conduct of pious Daniel, who, rather than forego the consolation resulting from that holy duty, voluntarily resigned himself to the fury of the lions.

It is worthy of special observation, that even infidel potentates, attracted by the sanctity and fame of God's temples, had been seen rendering homage to a Deity of whom they had no knowledge. It

is related of Alexander the Great, that, when he came to Jerusalem, struck with the splendor of the temple, and the majestic gravity of the venerable priest who officiated in it, he reverently bowed before the Lord of hosts, who was there worshipped.

On entering a newly erected house of worship, inspired with these sentiments, it will be natural for us to adopt the language of the aged patriarch Jacob; 'How dreadful is this place! this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.' 'We are now come unto Mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant; and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.' It is here the angel of the covenant addresses us as he did Moses, 'Put off thy shoes from thy feet, for the place where thou standest is holy ground.' These words suggest the following leading thoughts;

I. The Lord's house is a holy temple.

II. They describe the conduct becoming his worshippers.

First.. The Lord's house is a holy temple.

The tabernacle of God is now with men, and he will dwell with them and be their God. Universal space is his temple, every portion of which is filled with his presence. If we go forward or back, ward; if we search on the right hand or the left; if we ascend up into heaven, or go down into the abyss; if we traverse the ocean, and are wafted on the wings of the wind,—it is his invisible hand that guides and sustains us; for 'in him we live, and move, and have our being,' in all periods, places, and circumstances. The time has arrived, when our Lord's address to the woman of Samaria is emphatically applicable; 'The hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father.' The secret ejaculations of piety, or the humble, though solitary adorations of the Christian, are not disregarded by him who dwells in the high and holy place. He who said, 'Enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut the door, pray to thy Father who seeth in secret,' will furnish in these retreats a rich repast to all who cultivate communion with him. Private prayer to God, lays the foundation for the most spiritual and acceptable devotion in every other form. It prepares the Christian to hold intercourse with the world as Moses did with the Israelites after he came down from the mount, clad in the habiliments of holiness. He consequently entertains the deepest respect for the attributes and institutions of Jehovah, and enters with becoming interest and zeal, into the employment of grateful praise and de-

vout homage at the domestic altar. In this delightful frame, how welcome is the sound that lights upon his ear, 'Come, let us go to the house of the Lord;' and his glad heart readily responds, 'My feet shall stand within thy wall, O Jerusalem!' The Lord's house is a holy temple, because,

1. *Its divine occupant is holy.* 'Thus saith the high and lofty One, that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place.' When the ark, which had long abode in a movable tabernacle, was brought to Zion, its residence became permanent. Hence, God represents it as the place of his rest. From that time the bright cloud, or emblem of the Deity, dwelt between the cherubims upon the mercy-seat; and God became accessible through sacrifices. But now we have no *visible* emblem of Jehovah in his earthly temple. The Urim and Thummim, by which the ancient priest corresponded with God in behalf of the people, are no more; the fire ceases to flame on material altars, nor does the incense, as formerly, arise towards heaven. Nor is there any necessity for these visible tokens of the Divine presence, when he who is greater than types has come to his temple. Who will dispute about shadows, so long as he possesses the substance? Who can be so tenacious of emblems, while he firmly grasps the thing signified? It is the spiritual presence of God, which is now felt by his people. The divine unction rests down on them, and a bright cloud encircles them. Hence, says the Saviour, referring to his Godhead, 'Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst.' If this is true at the same moment in Asia and America, in Europe and Africa, then is Jesus Christ the Omnipresent God. He holdeth the stars in his right hand, and walketh amidst the golden candlesticks. He whose eyes are as a flame of fire, marks the order, zeal, humility, faith, and devotion of his worshippers; and his all-penetrating glance is fixed upon the coldness, levity, pride and unbelief of those who say, 'Lord, Lord,' but do not the things he requires. Though the doctrine of a direct intercourse between God and his rational creatures, is opposed by infidels, it cannot be questioned by firm believers in revelation. Indeed, as God is an indivisible, yet all-pervading spirit, we can have no intercourse with him, unless it be through the medium of our spiritual or internal senses. Hence the scriptures speak of our *hearing* the voice of God, *seeing* him who is invisible, *tasting* the word of God, and *drinking* the water of life. What can this group of expressions mean, if not that man may have immediate intercourse with his maker? In what manner can we account for the heart-rending convictions of guilt, which seized Peter's hearers on the day of Pentecost, except that the word of God, which is sharper than any two-edged sword, became

a discerner of the thoughts and intents of their hearts? And what could produce that oneness of mind, which characterized believers on that memorable occasion, and induced so high a degree of munificence and fellow feeling, but the Holy Ghost with which they were said to be filled? It may be objected, that the display of divine glory on the day of Pentecost, as well as the revelation made to Saul on his way to Damascus, and to John in the isle of Patmos, were supernatural, and are not to be expected in these days, when the canon of revelation is completed. But if no divine influence be demanded merely to confirm the truth of revelation, yet a supernatural influence is necessary so to imprint that revelation on the human mind, as to produce conviction in the sinner, and joy unspeakable in the saint.

2. *The doctrines taught in God's temple are holy.*

The gospel is a system of doctrines so constructed by its Divine Author, as to bring glory to God, suppress licentiousness, and promote holiness and good will among men. It signifies God's will to mankind by the prophets, and in these last days by his own Son. We live in a day when doctrines, especially those which tend to holiness of heart and life, are exploded by many. 'T is a popular sentiment with many, that it is of little consequence what sentiment a man adopts, if his heart and life are correct. But if erroneous doctrine be embraced, it will not fail to produce its injurious, if not ruinous effects. We may as well say, that it is immaterial whether a man take a dose of arsenic or wine, if his health is only good. Who can take burning coals into his bosom, and not be burned? Who can swallow poison and not be destroyed? So neither can we be in the habit of imbibing corrupt and unscriptural sentiments, and not be essentially injured both in heart and life. Doctrines will never be deemed unimportant, when we take into consideration the influence they exert upon our conduct. Our duties arise from the different relations we sustain as reasonable and accountable beings; and these relations must be understood, to have any salutary influence upon us. For instance, it is necessary that a child should be satisfied that such a man is his father, before he can love him in that character. The subject must be able to designate his sovereign, before he can obey him as such. Those who would annihilate all creeds, seem not to be apprized that their opposition tends to destroy all the relations which subsist among rational creatures, and consequently to destroy all morality; thus reducing man to a level with the beasts which perish, and leaving him no other security for his person, interest, and reputation, than the unbridled passions and lawless caprice of a depraved and unfeeling world. This thought may be easily transferred to illustrate the relation existing between God and us. Without a proper

knowledge of God's character, we cannot feel and act towards him aright. Ignorant of the law of God, we shall go on boasting of our own righteousness. If the doctrine of human depravity enters not into our system of faith, we shall be likely to consider regeneration as a mere figure, if not an absurdity, claiming the belief of none but religious visionaries. Destroy the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, and you fill the world with skeptics, who say, 'Where is the promise of his coming?—Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die.' But the doctrines of God's word explain human relations, and powerfully enforce the duties growing out of them, upon the consciences and hearts of mankind. Here we are taught, that though God made man upright, 'he has sought out many inventions;' that by violating the most important obligation to love and obedience, resulting from his relation to his Maker, he sunk into a guilty and degraded condition. Nor is he left in this forlorn situation. The word of God unfolds to us the atonement made by Jesus Christ. Infinite wisdom and goodness have concerted a scheme of redemption as deep as the apostacy, and as extensive as its results. In the gospel we ascertain that guilty creatures may be pardoned and sanctified through faith in the atonement. We are, moreover, expressly reminded of the eternal judgment; so that when God shall decide the secrets of men by Christ Jesus, the guilty delinquent will have no apology to screen him from the righteous indignation of his Judge. Such doctrines have a direct tendency to advance holiness. They are calculated to curb the ferocious temper, and thus introduce a peace into the soul which passeth understanding; and so far as their influence is felt in the world, order, holiness, and, as a consequence, happiness reign.

3. *The ordinances administered are holy.*

The ordinances are the provisions of God's house. They are sources of spiritual nourishment to all believers. *Baptism* is the seal of the covenant of grace under the Christian dispensation. By it believers are initiated into the fellowship of the visible church, sacredly obligate themselves to the performance of all Christian duties, and become eligible to Christian privileges. It reminds us of our depravity, and the need we have of the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost. The sacrament of the *Lord's Supper* brings to our view the tender, tragic scene of Calvary. This sacrament was intended to inflame our love to the Saviour, and to one another; to lessen the world in our esteem, to quicken our pursuit of holiness, and to convey that grace which will enable us to live godly in Christ Jesus, and qualify us for heaven. What Christian can lightly regard, and but rarely attend

this ordinance, who enters into the meaning, and feels the weight of our Saviour's injunction; 'Do this in remembrance of me?'

It was in the Jewish temple alone that the victims for sacrifice were slain, and the means of reconciliation exhibited. And it is through this ordinance we behold the sacrifice of the cross shadowed forth. We see in the death of God's Son, 'that without shedding of blood there is no remission.' Through this ordinance, the believer discovers a very significant meaning in the language of Christ, 'My flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him.' Nothing resembling this is to be found in the religious systems of the heathen. That man is a sinner, and deserves and dreads punishment, is apparent from their sacrifices and bodily tortures and mortifications; but *how* he can be pardoned and sanctified, they are unable to ascertain. With them, an impenetrable darkness broods over these most momentous questions; and nothing can solve them but that divine revelation, which faithfully unfolds the plan of redemption. The brightness of the Father's glory assuming human nature, dispersed the portentous cloud which hung heavy upon the prospects of a ruined world; thus discovering to us clearly how guilt may be pardoned consistently with the rights of justice, and the honor of the law. On Calvary the cross is elevated, and Jesus expires as an offering for sin. 'As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him might not perish, but have eternal life.' As a few loaves and fishes multiplied in the hands of Jesus, to the satisfying of hungry thousands, so the same divine influence renders the ordinances of religion a 'feast of marrow and fat things' to believers. To the lukewarm professor, this ordinance is merely an empty ceremony; but to the genuine Christian, it is an extraordinary occasion, for which he has been preparing by meditation and prayer. Hence when he meets his Saviour in the sacrament, he is enabled to say, 'He brought me to his banqueting house, and his banner over me was love.'

4. *The discipline exercised in God's house is holy.*

It is here that his laws are explained and enforced. The Lord sits as King in his own tabernacle, and governs it. His statutes are suited to the nature and capacity, and are calculated to exalt the moral character and condition of his faithful subjects. Perfect symmetry and order mark his family. Every member has a place assigned him, and a part to perform, which may contribute to the strength and beauty of the house; and a failure in duty may occasion disorder and weakness in the church. The Head of the church is invisible, and therefore governs by human instrumentality. When he ascended up on high, he gave to the church pastors, teachers,

prophets, and evangelists authorising them to comfort and govern according to Christ's word. He has conferred no discretionary power, but placed in the pastor's hand the statute of heaven, and said, by this shall my subjects be governed. And when Christ delegates to his ministers the power to govern the church, a corresponding obligation to submit to his authority on the part of his people is implied. Paul, writing to the Thessalonians, says, 'We beseech you brethren, know them which labor among you, and are over you in the Lord;' and to the Hebrews he adds, 'Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation.'

The church cannot be in a healthy and vigorous state without discipline. This when judiciously exercised, is the very ligament of the church. Without this, we know not whether he who enters is a friend or an enemy. It is this which draws the line of separation between the church and the world. Let Christian discipline be prostrated, and the rights and privileges of the church left unguarded, and she will be over-run with worldly, proud, contentious and immoral professors, between whom and the world lying in wickedness, there will exist no difference. But to exercise discipline to advantage, it must be attended to in season, with faithfulness, impartiality, and tenderness. Says an ingenuous writer, 'He who would successfully administer discipline in the church of God needs an eagle's eye to penetrate attendant circumstances, and a lady's hand to manage the most delicate case.' Let an evil be cured, if possible, where it originates; lest, like waters which are let out, it extend through the whole church. Save the disordered member by all lawful means; but be sure to amputate before the whole body becomes mortified. 'Brethren,' says the apostle, 'if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.' And, says our Lord, 'Moreover, if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him *alone*; if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, *then* take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church; but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican.' This seems to be, in miniature, the whole system of discipline which Christ has given to the church; and his ministers and people are sacredly bound to observe it.

5. *The defence given to the church is holy.*

The church has ever been eyed with jealousy by her enemies. Her interest has been artfully and maliciously represented as set up

in opposition to that of the state; and contention and bloodshed have been unjustly attributed to the peaceful religion of Christ. Hence, every plan that infernal ingenuity and malice could invent, has been devised for her extermination. Even in her infancy, the dragon tried his strength, but in vain.

The figures employed by the inspired penman to represent the church in affliction, clearly evince, that nothing but an Almighty arm could have secured her in the midst of the most unparalleled sufferings. The burning bush, in which the Lord appeared to Moses, was intended to illustrate the furnace of tribulation through which both the Jewish and Christian church have had to wade, but in which they have been miraculously preserved. The page of Ecclesiastical history faithfully delineates the sufferings of the church under Rome, pagan and papal; and with equal accuracy developes the wonderful manner in which God has vindicated her by crushing the power of her adversaries, and turning their mischievous policy against themselves. The blood of the martyrs has proved the precious seed, whence, in succeeding generations, an army of witnesses has been raised, who, counting not their lives dear unto themselves, have boldly followed their Lord without the camp, bearing his reproach. When Herod sought to destroy the infant Saviour, he hoped, doubtless, by extinguishing the light of Israel, to shroud the moral world in impenetrable darkness. Pontius Pilate with the Jews, raged against the Lord and his Anointed, saying, 'Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us; but He who sitteth in the heavens has laughed, and held their counsels in derision.' Those who are acquainted with the history of the church, need not be told the fate of Nero, Aurelian, Dioclesian, Julian, and other blood-thirsty enemies of the church. And why, my brethren, has not every christian temple been demolished, the ordinances of religion interdicted, and even religion itself blotted out from under heaven? It is because the 'Lord is in his holy temple.' Empires have risen to the zenith of their glory, from which they have gradually declined, till they have become engulphed in oblivion. And what mighty energy has preserved the church amidst such tremendous convulsions? The only answer that can be given to this question is, 'The foundation of God standeth sure.' The glorious Author of our religion long since predicted, 'Upon this rock will I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against her;' and subsequent events have proved that encouraging declaration to be infallible. The Lord will continue to send the rod of his strength out of Zion, and to rule even in the midst of his enemies. He will cause the wrath of man to praise him, and the remainder of wrath he will restrain, until

his enemies shall lick the dust, and all that are incensed against him, shall bow down at the soles of his feet.

II. *They describe the conduct becoming his worshippers.* 'Let all the earth keep silence before him.' By silence here, we are to understand profound respect and submission. Reference is here had to an Eastern custom. The guards, officers, and nobles, in Eastern courts, when they attend their princes, keep the utmost silence. If earthly princes command such respect from their subjects, what reverence is due to the King of kings and Lord of lords? But what course of conduct is most indicative of respect for Jehovah, especially when we enter his sanctuary?

1. *If we would respect God, we must enter his temple in a devout frame of mind.* Religious worship is an ordinance of God. Hence, we are commanded not to forget the assembling of ourselves together. But he not only requires our worship, he also prescribes the *manner* in which we must present it. We are not to rush thoughtlessly into the house of God, as though it were a theatre or a rendezvous for carnal gratification. 'Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, and be more ready to hear, than to give the sacrifice of fools: for they consider not that they do evil.' God is there; and no worldly nor unholy thoughts should ever intrude within the doors. If Abraham considered the place and employment too holy, when he ascended the mount to sacrifice his son to the Lord, to admit his servants, how scrupulously should we exclude all contemplations of an earthly and selfish character when we enter the sacred enclosure where God is worshipped. Employments also which are admissible on ordinary occasions, would be highly reprehensible in the house of God. But when no special advantage is derived from hearing the gospel, overlooking our own indifference and worldliness, we are apt to seek for the cause in the coldness or incompetency of the minister. It is as necessary that the mind be prepared for the profitable reception of the gospel, by previous prayer, as that the ground should be softened by the showers of heaven, to prepare it for the reception of the seed. The institutions of heaven may be within our reach, and the ministers of religion may preach till they are called to their eternal home, but unless we are prepared to 'receive with meekness the ingrafted word,' it will prove a savour of death unto death. Not only should worldly projects be dismissed, when we go to the house of God to receive instruction, but the mind should be unembarrassed and open to the convictions of truth, so that the word being mixed with faith, it may expel erroneous principles and unholy affections, and conform the heart entirely to the gospel. 'God is a spirit, and they who worship him must do it in spirit and in truth.' Those who expend the most time in self-examination and prayer,

preparatory to hearing the truth, usually secure the greatest amount of good from it, and while listening to the joyful sound, are enabled to exclaim, 'How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts!'

2. *Keeping silence before the Lord, implies, that our deportment in his house be decorous.* A more weighty and important question cannot be put to our consciences on going to the temple of God, than what our object is in resorting to that sacred place. Is it merely to pass away an hour that hangs heavily upon us? Is it idly to sit, or curiously gaze round upon the congregation, that we may show our fine attire, and learn the newest fashions? It may be, some come merely to criticise on the sentiments, oratory, or personal accomplishments of the preacher, but, forgetting that as guilty sinners, they should tremble at God's word. We should enter the house of God to learn humility, and ascertain our latter end. It was in the sanctuary, that David saw the fate of the wicked, and learned contentment. 'I was envious,' says he, 'at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked.' To reconcile their great worldly prosperity with their extreme wickedness, was too great a task for him, 'until he went into the sanctuary of God; then,' continues he, 'understood I their end.'

A lamentable evil has prevailed in many of our congregations, of devoting the time previous to divine worship in irreligious conversation. But it certainly would be far more acceptable to God, were we to endeavor to abstract our thoughts from the world. The house of God would then indeed be to us frequently like the mount of transfiguration, and we should have occasion to exclaim, 'It is good to be here!'

Punctuality, as to the time of our getting to the house of worship, is an important item in that respect, which God requires from his worshippers. Nothing can be more indecorous, than to disturb the devotions of the sanctuary, by abruptly rushing into the house of God in the midst of prayer or sermon, and thus diverting the attention of a whole congregation from the appropriate services of God's house. And as we appear in the sanctuary to take a part in *all* its holy services, it is equally unbecoming to retire until regularly dismissed, unless there be an imperious demand for it.

It should not be a place for carnal amusement, merchandise, or iniquity. The strong rebuke which our Saviour gave to those who profaned the temple of God when he was upon earth, is still applicable to many who call themselves Christians: 'My house shall be called of all nations the house of prayer, but ye have made it a den of thieves.'

3. *But we must not only by external decency respect the Lord of Hosts, we must also engage heartily in the solemn and delightful devotions of his house.* We are personally concerned in the great

duties and inestimable privileges of religion. The business we have to transact with our Maker is infinitely momentous; nor can these duties be performed by proxy. Every man must attend to his own eternal interests, because he stands or falls to his own master. The word of life is addressed to us individually, and the saving influence of truth on our hearts depends much upon its cordial reception. Though in the sanctuary, attended with every consideration calculated to produce conviction of guilt and weakness, and at the same time to awaken the warmest gratitude, yet we have no security against temptation. The devil will suggest worldly, unholy, perhaps profane thoughts to our minds, and without great exertion we cannot keep our hearts in a devout and profitable frame. We may be tempted to satisfy ourselves with a routine of outward ceremonies, and thus fail to enter into deep communion with the Father of spirits. To prevent so serious an evil, as to continue like the heath in the desert, or the parched land, while the rain of divine goodness is descending, we should struggle in prayer to obtain God's blessing; neither should we rest satisfied, till we know that the Gospel is the power of God to our salvation. Satisfied that divine truth has triumphed over our ignorance, pride and unbelief, and made us the children of God by faith, we shall be prompted to a generous concern for those who are still in the gall of bitterness, and the bonds of iniquity.

INFERENCES. 1. *If this is God's house, and a holy temple, then it ought to be solemnly and exclusively dedicated to Him.* We dedicate this *sacred desk*, not as a mint of controversy, or a seat for political disquisition, but the place of doctrine, instruction, exhortation and comfort. Here will stand the 'legate of the skies,' commissioned by Jehovah to negotiate between heaven and earth. He has received his orders from the Lord of life, beyond which he is not at liberty to go. Bear with him when he delivers the *whole* counsel of God; for he dare not compromise, or lower the standard of Christian doctrine, morals, and experience, to the pride, passion, and self-interest of worldly men. 'Wo is unto him if he preach not the Gospel' as he receives it from Christ; and this is the reason that will induce him to warn the wicked, and keep his garments free from the blood of all men. From this elevated and holy spot will the thunders of Sinai roar, and its lightnings glare against the heaven-daring offender: and here the precious promises will distil from the lips of the minister of Christ, sweeter than honey, for the encouragement of the mourner in Zion. May no unhallowed foot soil this sacred desk! May nothing here be advanced, dishonorable to God or ruinous to man! May the priest's lips always preserve knowledge, and his heart that holy flame of devotion, which alone can ensure success to his efforts. Should he, through the fear of man, prophesy smooth things, he

will dishonor his sacred profession, and the souls he has ruined will be swift witnesses against him in the day of judgment. This *holy altar* we consecrate to God. When it is surrounded with the 'sacramental host of God's elect,' to whom the sacred memorials of a Saviour's mangled body and shed blood shall be administered, may renewed tokens of divine favor be vouchsafed, to confirm the faith, animate the hope, and inflame the love of God's people; and may none who shall here commune with Christ, ever like Judas betray or lift up their heel against Him; may mourners in Zion crowd to this altar, and receive remission of sins and the renewing of the Holy Ghost! All these pews are henceforth to be considered as dedicated to the Lord, and their occupants will remember they are on holy ground. May they not be unnecessarily left vacant, much less burdened with sleepy, captious, or trifling hearers!

2. *If this is God's house, then the transactions of this day, and all future services here, must be of infinite interest both to saint and sinner.* The light of eternity alone will fully disclose the consequences of erecting a house of worship, and establishing the gospel in this place. Many of the present and future generations will probably hear the everlasting gospel in this house, repent, and obtain pardon through faith in the Son of God; and through continuance in well-doing, find their way to heaven. But is there no fear that many will receive the grace of God in vain; and by rejecting truth, at last go down to ruin? Yes, while those who set on the same seat, and hear the same sermon with you, may augment the number, and swell the anthem of the redeemed, you may be numbered with unbelievers, and wail in anguish forever. Millions upon millions of ages after this temple shall have crumbled to dust, will those who now and hereafter worship here, look back to this sanctuary with indescribable pleasure or regret. God's messengers who shall have labored here, the prayers, sermons, exhortations, ordinances, and tears which shall have been witnessed by the angels, who anxiously watch over our religious assemblies, shall be called up at that tremendous day, when Christ shall judge the world in righteousness, as evidences for or against those who hear the gospel in this house. How should you hear and improve by the gospel, when eternal happiness or wo 'depends on every breath!' It is our earnest prayer, that you may have occasion to look down from the cloudless heights of glory, when the earth and heavens are passed away, with more than seraphic pleasure, to the day of your espousals in this house. Here, my brethren, may your children, and children's children, be born of the Spirit, and ripen for the heavenly garner. And when this temple, made with hands, shall be blended with the general ruin of nature, may we worship more perfectly in the mansion above, whose maker and builder is God. AMEN.

SERMON XVIII.*

THE KINGDOM.

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"Thy kingdom come." LUKE xi. 2.

WHEN the inspired writers wish to convey an exalted notion of the divine power and glory, they frequently represent the Deity as a Monarch, who administers the affairs of the world as a king those of his kingdom. "The Lord is a great God and a great King." Ps. xcv. 3. The apostle Paul ascribes to him honor and glory, as the "King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God" (1 Tim. i. 17); and elsewhere declares his supreme dominion as the "blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords." 1 Tim. vi. 15. In many places, these titles are distinctly applied to the Lord Jesus Christ, for he is called "the King of Israel," "the King of saints," "the King of kings," "the King of Glory." Not only the titles, but also the appendages of royalty are included in the description of his majesty. "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy Kingdom." Heb. i. 8. Let us consider,

I. THE KINGDOM;

II. ITS COMING.

* This sermon was found among the posthumous papers of professor Smith, and was sent to us for publication by our much esteemed friend, Rev. Dr. Fisk, accompanied by the following remarks:—"It is probable the author intended to have made some alterations in it, before he permitted it to go to the public, as he was heard to make some remarks to that effect, not long before his death He evidently intended it for the 'Preacher,' and I therefore herewith submit it for publication, not feeling myself at liberty to alter a sentiment in it. Indeed, it will be found, I believe, to be a very correct sermon, both in doctrine and composition. Little did he think, when he was writing it, that he was so near that kingdom of glory, which he so feelingly described. As none who knew him could doubt his relation to the kingdom of grace on earth, so none of us can doubt but he is now in the kingdom of glory. 'The kingdoms are but one.' He died 27th December, 1832, aged 37."

I. THE KINGDOM. The boundless universe is the realm over which the great Jehovah presides—a territory both unconfined and immeasurable. To him the earth belongs, as far as human feet have trodden, or human eyes have looked. The visible heavens, with all their furniture of revolving globes are upheld by his power, and subject to his control; while all ranks of creatures which dwell in this and in unknown worlds, constitute the subjects of his immense empire. But, confined as we are to a small circle of observation, it is impossible for us to know much concerning the vast regions which are under the sovereign sway of God.

Our knowledge even of the globe which we inhabit, is very imperfect: many countries have never been explored, and the vast abyss which forms the great basin of the ocean, is concealed wholly from human view, together with all the variety of unknown creatures which frequent its depths, without ever showing themselves at the surface: much less are we acquainted with those innumerable orbs which deck the arch of heaven, or with those beings which dwell upon them.

But revelation unfolds, what to us is of the greatest importance, that there are eternal abodes in some distant part of the universe, to which we, the children of time, are to be transferred, after having spent a few years in our present condition; that our mode of existence will be essentially different from this, and that uninterrupted happiness or misery will be our eternal portion, as the recompense of a godly or of a sinful life.

There is reason to believe that God deals much in the same manner with all his moral and intelligent creatures. To all, in the first period of their being, a state of probation is assigned, which is followed by a state of retribution. Thus he dealt with angels, some of whom kept not their first estate. We, in like manner, are now on our trial; and, if there be other moral intelligences besides angels and men, may we not believe them to be under a similar administration?

There are, then, three states of being, in which the subjects of this universal kingdom live. The first is that in which we discover ourselves to be. To us, the Sovereign Disposer of all things has appointed a habitation for a few years in this world, that, by a life of obedience, we may obtain his favor, and secure eternal bliss. He has revealed his nature and his will in a manner and degree suited to our capacity, appointed the means of access to himself, given his Son for our redemption, and invited us to the everlasting possession of heaven.

When, in his good pleasure, he shall have brought our trial to its close, he will institute a most solemn judgment upon our conduct. Then shall all receive the reward of their deeds. The Eternal Judge shall separate the righteous from the wicked forever; and from the glory of that heaven to which those shall be exalted, or from that irrecoverable perdition into which these shall be plunged, it will be impossible to return to live again on earth.

Another state is that of angels and saints in heaven. Though God is omnipresent, yet he displays his presence, by peculiar tokens, in some places more than in others; as, for instance, in temples dedicated to his worship: such was the *Shekinah*, or supernatural light, which rested over the oracle in the Jewish temple. He manifests himself by the agency of the Holy Spirit, in the congregations of the faithful. "Where two or three are met together in my name, there am I." But in heaven his presence is revealed in a way, which, though inconceivable to us, must be glorious beyond all that eye hath seen, or ear heard.

Like the sun in the midst of the visible heavens, dispersing in every direction the beams of *cheerful* light, giving life and vigor to innumerable creatures; so, "enthroned above all height," dwelling in the light which no man can approach, the Centre and Source of all blessedness, Jehovah, sheds on all the beams of his love. Those beings whose superior holiness and dignity permit them to dwell nearest the throne, enjoy his largest favors; but in all the apartments of his courts, and in all the precincts of the city and habitation of God, there is glory ineffable, and uninterrupted delights. "In his presence is fulness of joy, and at his right hand are pleasures forevermore."

In these domains of the great King dwell those angels who fell not, and those holy men who have come up through great tribulation, and through grace have endured to the end. They are here honored with the perpetual society of their exalted Lord, and are sent to execute his commands as ministering spirits, or as messengers of mercy to the human family.

In a third portion of his realm, far from the blaze of glory which surrounds the Sun of Goodness, and even beyond the faintest ray which he emits; in the outer or extreme darkness, lie the regions of despair and misery—the eternal abode of fallen angels and of damned men. This is the immense prison of his kingdom, in which his rebellious subjects are confined, bound with chains of darkness, and shut up in recesses of eternal anguish and gloom. On that land no joyful day ever dawns; its sun is set forever. The wretched outcasts who inhabit it, are doomed to bear the tortures of perpetual solitude, or of misery aggravated by the presence and sight of fellow sufferers; while the tedious periods of eternity move heavily along, and not the feeblest hope of deliverance ever arises to allay their grief.

In scripture language, the phrases "kingdom of heaven," "kingdom of God," frequently occur, and denote,

1. The place of eternal happiness and glory; as in Matt. viii. 11—"They shall come from the east and from the west, and shall sit down with Abraham and Isaac in the kingdom of heaven." The parallel passage, Luke xiii. 29, reads "kingdom of God."

2. The gospel dispensation. "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven

is at hand." Matt. iii. 2. "The kingdom of God is come unto you." Matt. xii. 28.

3. The overthrow of the Jewish polity, and the destruction of Jerusalem, as consequent upon the introduction of the Messiah's reign. "But I tell you of a truth, there be some standing here, which shall not taste of death till they see the kingdom of God." Luke ix. 27.

4. Vital religion in the heart, by which sin is subdued, and the soul made subject to the dominion of grace. "The kingdom of God is not in word but in power." 1 Cor. iv. 20. "The kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." Rom. xiv. 17.

5. The universal reign of Christ. "Now is come salvation and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ," or of his anointed, Χριστου αυτου. Rev. xii. 10.

Within the limits of an ordinary discourse, it will be impossible to repeat all that may be said on the gospel kingdom. I shall therefore confine myself to a few such particulars as suit the present occasion.

The kingdom of Christ established in the heart consists in a full and voluntary submission to the will of God. This is the true spirit and design of the gospel, and nothing short of this can constitute us the people of God. Professions, creeds or forms, though proper in their place, can never compensate for the want of that sincere, holy and obedient love which the word of God enjoins, as the essence of religion. Before this kingdom is set up in the heart, sin must be destroyed. The tyranny of depraved nature must be abolished, every passion and power of the soul subdued, and even "every thought brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ." 2 Cor. x. 5. In a word, the conquest must be complete, Jesus must have the unrivalled possession of body, soul and spirit as his proper right, for, "*as* sin reigned unto death, even *so* does grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord." Rom. v. 21.

It is a fine observation of a late author, that Jesus Christ never saved a soul which he did not govern, nor is Christ precious or estimable to any man who does not feel a spirit of subjection to him.

The phrases "kingdom of grace," and "kingdom of glory," though they occur not in the sacred writings, seem to be very proper expressions to denote the connection and resemblance between the present and the eternal state of believers; for these are departments of the same grand empire; one being the perfection and consummation of the other. So sings the poet in the following beautiful lines:—

"Thee in thy glorious realm they praise,
And bow before the throne;
We in the kingdom of thy grace,
The kingdoms are but one.

"The holy to the holiest leads,
From thence our spirits rise;
And he that in thy statutes treads,
Shall meet thee in the skies."

The dispensation of grace under which we live is termed a kingdom; but we are not to look for a temporal dominion. In nature and operation, it essentially differs from all human establishments. "My kingdom," says the Saviour, "is not of this world." The expectation of a secular prince in the person of the Messiah, constituted the grand mistake of the Jews; and we are not far from an error, similar to this in its tendency, whenever we would extend or establish the cause of religion by the violent measures of political authority. The Redeemer of the world, when he entered upon his glorious mission, assumed neither the character of a prince, nor a conqueror, nor even that of a philosopher. On the contrary, his advent was humble, his life laborious, his doctrines unpopular, his death ignominious. This seems an inauspicious commencement for a kingdom.

Yet, "who hath despised the day of small things." There is, indeed, no subject of human thought more noble, more animating to the man of God, than the march of the church militant, from the time, when

"The Sun of Righteousness appeared,
To set in blood no more,—"

to these latter days in which God is revealing his power and goodness beyond former example. Soon after his ascension, Jesus sent the promised Comforter; and on the day of pentecost commissioned anew his apostles and ministers. All gloom and fear were now dispelled; and the angel of the covenant appeared, in his followers, "fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners." From this period the cause of truth progressed with wonderful rapidity. The apostles or their successors penetrated into every region, traversing the earth from east to west, and from north to south, until, as is supposed, every part of the then known world had received the tidings of salvation, and all ranks of men, from the prince to the slave, paid their willing tribute to the Lord of life and glory.

Amidst this prosperity, when it almost seemed that Christianity had no more victories to gain, there gradually arose a cloud of dismal aspect, charged with materials more terrible than pestilence, famine or sword, which overhung and finally enveloped the earth. Error and superstition, bigotry and violence, drenched, with tears and blood, the fairest portions of our globe, and swept away every vestige of primitive religion. Such was the obscurity of the times, that the former glory of the church was as though it had never been. These dark ages, as they are generally called, exhibit some of the most extraordinary events of history; events which show—what we are naturally surprised to

discover—the most rapid declension of genuine religion and learning, from times distinguished and illustrious for both.

However, in the fifteenth century, it pleased God to raise up Luther and others, who strenuously opposed the prevailing errors, and soon kindled a flame which blazed over the whole of Europe. This was a new era in the annals of the church. But the lapse of a few centuries plainly discovered a lamentable degeneracy, even in the followers of the German reformer. Infidelity without, and formality within the church, combined to spread delusion and impiety throughout the land, while vital godliness was laughed out of the company of the great, and insulted by the vulgar.

This was the state of things in England, about the middle of the last century, when Wesley was raised up. Small and unpropitious at the outset, the prospects of this great and good man soon brightened with success. Under the guidance of Providence, he stemmed a universal torrent of opposition, until, for every ten, God gave him hundreds, for every hundred, thousands, and for every thousand, tens of thousands. How striking and even prophetic are his own words:—

"Saw ye not the cloud arise,
Little as a human hand?
Now it spreads along the skies,
Hangs o'er all the thirsty land;
Lo! the promise of a shower
Drops already from above;
But the Lord will shortly pour
All the Spirit of his love."

Wesley has gone to his reward; but he has left behind, in the affection of those who knew him, and in the admiration of those who follow him, memorials which can never perish, as long as the name of Methodism exists. Though dead, he yet speaketh. May all his followers possess the same religion which he displayed in his life, and preached with his lips, until

"Millions of souls shall feel its power,
And bear it down to millions more."

We gather from the general tenor of prophecy, that the kingdom of the Redeemer, which is already large and glorious, will finally become universal and perpetual; when Jesus shall indeed be "the Desire of all nations," and when "the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of God." Thus the prophet Isaiah, transported in spirit to our day, cries out, "Unto us a Child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end." Isaiah ix. 6, 7.

The most remarkable prophecy in relation to this subject is contained in the second and seventh chapters of Daniel. It is delivered in two visions or dreams, one by Nebuchadnezzar, under the similitude of an image, compounded of different metals, which Daniel interprets, and the other by the prophet himself, under the representation of four beasts, which an angel interprets to him. We cannot here enlarge upon these predictions, as far as they relate to the four great monarchies which preceded the coming of Christ; but the conclusion is to our purpose—

"Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet, that were made of iron and clay, and brake them in pieces." Dan. ii. 34. This points out the final subjugation of all empires to the Messiah; and Daniel's vision unfolds the same event. "And I saw,—and behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given to him dominion and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations and languages should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." Dan. vii. 13, 14.

These predictions are not yet fully accomplished. "The stone cut out without hands" has indeed broken in pieces the preceding empires. We may perhaps say, it has already become a great mountain, but it does not yet fill the whole earth. Nevertheless, this part of the prophecy hastens to its fulfilment, and we cannot suppose that many ages will roll their mighty round, before that day shall dawn upon the world, in which Jesus will be hailed the Lord of all, and his kingdom flourish in the fulness of its power and glory.

II. The Coming of this Kingdom. Our text is a prayer, and a part of the best form ever indited. Let us then, before we proceed any further, inquire what it is for which we pray, when we use this petition, "Thy kingdom come."

First, the submission of the soul to the power of God, and the operations of his grace, as a consequence of regeneration, together with the love and knowledge of Christ, constituting internal religion, may be viewed as objects of this prayer. "The kingdom of God is within you." Luke xvii. 21. Therefore all who are sensible that unholy principles and tempers predominate in their hearts, enslaving them in the worst of bondage, and repelling the influence and counsels of God in his spirit, word and ordinances; in short, the sinful, vile, guilty and miserable, all may pray, if they pray sincerely, "Thy kingdom come."

In the next place, as this passage cannot relate to the commencement of the present dispensation, in which sense the kingdom had already come when our Lord pronounced these words, so, it is likely,

it was designed to point out the most glorious state of the church under the gospel, which is to take place at some future period; an event for which every saint of the Most High prays, when, in the words of our text, he says, "Thy kingdom come."

It must be admitted, that Christianity has never been so universally diffused as to justify the assertion, that it has, at any time since its rise, embraced the largest possible circle of influence, and height of grandeur, allotted to it in the divine purpose. If it has been preached in all nations, yet all nations have not universally received it. By far the greater part of the human family, in every age, has remained in error and idolatry, amidst all the labors of apostles and Christian ministers. This glorious state of things is, therefore, yet to come.

And that it will sooner or later take place, is certain from the concordant testimony of all the prophets, and of the apostles of Christ, especially John the Evangelist. According to their declarations, the happy period shall arrive, when "the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High" (Dan. vii. 27); when Jesus "shall have the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession" (Ps. ii. 8); when "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea" (Is. xi. 9); when "the fulness of the gentiles shall come in, and all Israel shall be saved." Rom. xi. 25, 26.

We should avoid interpreting too literally those passages which speak of this time. Such interpretations have led to a thousand wild speculations, and to theories as little supported by the Scriptures as by the Hindoo Shasters. This, however, is an error as old as the Christian era. The sanguine expectations of the Jews relative to the Messiah, and their subsequent disappointment in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, arose from no other source, than literal and exaggerated explanations of the Old Testament prophecies concerning Christ and his kingdom. These explanations gained currency and credit by numerous traditions, spurious revelations, pretended visions, and Rabbinical dogmas; the result of which was, that a King and kingdom, so different in all respects from their preconceived notions, gathered from the vivid and metaphorical language of the prophets, were treated with dishonor, and finally rejected.

Even the apostles appear not fully to have understood the proper character in which Christ the Lord came upon earth, until after his resurrection. A secular monarch, a secular kingdom, and secular advantages, in their view, constituted the new dispensation. And certainly such errors in men of the best motives, could only have originated in too free an interpretation of prophecy, and in popular traditions.

We are exposed to the same danger in our explanations of the

universal kingdom of the Redeemer: "The prophecies relative to the millennium can only be fully understood, when fully accomplished." They then afford the strongest proof of their divine authority, and produce, in the minds of men, that conviction of gospel truth, and of the genuineness of religion, which, in the grand scheme of Heaven, they were appointed to produce. For the present, we had better remain in darkness respecting these predictions, rather than hazard a single erroneous conjecture. Where we have no evidence, we may spend an eternity in conjecture, without certainly arriving at any just conclusion, or useful result. There are nevertheless some things which may be legitimately inferred from the general tenor of prophecy, upon which we may depend with confidence. We may also be aided in our explanation of those predictions which relate to the millennium, by observing in what way those concerning the coming and offices of the Messiah have met with their accomplishment.

With these preliminary remarks, let us proceed to notice what the Scriptures authorize us to believe concerning this universal kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ.

In extent, this kingdom shall comprehend the whole habitable earth. "From the rising of the sun, even unto the going down of the same, my name shall be great among the gentiles." Mal. i. 11. "And the Lord shall be king over all the earth: in that day there shall be one Lord, and his name one." Zec. xiv. 9. Every nation shall delight to do him homage, and dwell beneath his shadow. The Roman poet's flattering prediction of Cæsar's empire, shall be truly accomplished in the person of the Messiah:—

"*Imperium oceano, famam qui terminet astris.*"—ENEID I. 287.

"His sway shall ocean bound, his fame the skies."*

According to Rev. xx. 2 and 4, the duration of Christ's reign on earth will be "a thousand years."* This is evidently a certain number taken for an uncertain—a mode of expression not unusual with the prophets. Some understand the phrase literally, as used to denote a thousand years, neither more nor less; others, understand by it a period of 365,000 years, reckoning each day for a year. But this kind of precision does not correspond with the ordinary course of sublunary events. We are on safer ground, when we consider these words of the evangelist to mean simply a great length of time, or a duration of many successive ages.

This state of the church will be distinguished by the universal diffusion of gospel knowledge. All people shall "know the joyful sound; they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance." Ps. lxxxix.

* Hence the term *millennium*, from the Latin *mille*, a thousand, and *annus*, a year.

15. "In those days they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord, for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest." Heb. viii. 11. Science, as the handmaid of Religion, shall doubtless extend her wings over every class of society; the means of information will be multiplied; and in a state of things so favorable to the cultivation of intellect, we may reasonably conclude, that men of the most astonishing attainments in every branch of useful learning, will be found in all quarters of the globe.

Righteousness shall every where prevail, and the benign principles of the gospel shall govern all hearts. So saith the prophet—"Thy people shall be all righteous." Is. lx. 21. Yet this may be understood with some limitation. Religion shall triumph, and Christ shall reign; but that opposers should arise, may certainly be admitted, as this state, unlike heaven, does not exclude the possibility of sin. Nevertheless, the tables will be turned and the righteous as far exceed in number the wicked, as they are now exceeded by them. While they who still "do wickedly" shall suffer peculiar marks of the divine displeasure. "The sinner, being a hundred years old, shall be *accursed*." Is. lxv. 20.

War and violence shall wholly cease. "Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." Is. ii. 4. "Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders: but thou shalt call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise." Is. lx. 18. Uninterrupted peace shall overspread the earth, and the song of the angelic harbingers shall be renewed in its full sense—"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth *peace*, good-will towards men." Luke ii. 14.

As the brute creation have suffered from the fall, so it appears that in this new state of things, their ferocity, and every noxious quality, will be eradicated; so that they will thenceforth delight in the society of man and of each other. "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain." Is. xi. 6—9.

Premature or early deaths will seldom occur, and the lives of men will be protracted generally to a good old age. "There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die a hundred years old. They shall not build and another inhabit, they shall not plant and another eat: for as the days of a tree are the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands." Is. lxv. 20—22.

Hence the population of the globe must far exceed the present proportion. Instead of eight hundred millions of inhabitants on the surface of the earth, as now, there may be then, after the lapse of a few ages, many times that number.* To supply the wants of all these, the earth shall be blessed with fertility, and Divine Providence will watch over both seed-time and harvest. "They shall not labor in vain, nor bring forth for trouble." Is. lxv. 23. "They shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them." Is. lxv. 21. In addition to this, arid deserts and uninhabited wilds may, through changes effected by divine power, and the industry of man, be rendered proper for human residence and support, and thus "in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert. The parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water." Is. xxxv. 6, 7.

The ministers of God shall be held in great honor and esteem; their presence shall be welcomed in every place, and their message heard with delight. "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace, that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!" They shall be men of great zeal and energy. "The watchmen shall lift up the voice." They shall no longer disagree, but unite in worship and in sentiment. "With the voice together shall they sing: for they shall see eye to eye." Is. lii. 7, 8.

At this period, when "the fulness of the gentiles" shall have come in (Rom. xi. 25), the blindness of Israel shall be done away, and that people, long "scattered and peeled," shall be restored to their ancient privileges, in conformity with the gracious promise of God to their fathers. "It shall come to pass in that day," says the prophet, "that the Lord shall set his hand again the *second* time to recover the remnant of his people. And he shall set up an ensign† for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth." Is. xi. 11, 12. That they shall again inhabit Palestine, and rebuild Jerusalem, is a point on which there exists some doubt; inasmuch as those prophecies, from a literal interpretation of which this event has been inferred, are perhaps designed merely to show the superior glory of their nation in the latter day; and in doing this, what could be more affecting, what more impressive to an Israelite, than representations taken from his own city and country! The particular region which the Jews shall then occupy, does not so much appear to be the object of these predictions, as that they shall be embodied as a nation, and gathered into the church of Christ, in full possession of all the blessings of the new covenant. Jer. xxxi. 31.

* Perhaps this increase of population is alluded to by Isaiah, ch. lx. 20—"A little one shall become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation."

† Christ proclaimed to the gentiles.

Mankind shall be liberated from all diabolical influence and temptation. According to the evangelist John, an angel shall lay hold on the dragon, the old serpent, who is the devil and Satan; shall bind him, expel him from the earth, imprison and set a seal upon him, "that he might *deceive* the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled." Rev. xx. 2, 3. Doubtless, with their head, the entire host of Satanic agents shall be driven from their present field of malicious labor.

Other grand events, predicted by St. John, in immediate connection with the foregoing, are the resurrection of the martyrs, and their subsequent reign with Christ, events, concerning which a great variety of opinions has existed in the learned world—a certain proof of the obscurity of those prophecies which relate to them. Perhaps the following inferences may be drawn from the testimony of sacred writ, without danger to the truth of inspiration, or to the dignity of the Redeemer's kingdom.

First. That the martyrs of Jesus, and other saints of God, whose character is distinctly specified in Rev. xx. 4, shall *live* (ἔζησαν, *lived*, a past tense, used for a future). This resurrection is not liable to any objection, which will not stand with equal force against that of the saints who arose and appeared to many, at the resurrection of Christ.

Secondly. They shall reign (ἐβασίλευσαν, reigned) with Christ a thousand years. It is not said *on earth*, as the passage is often falsely quoted. These words do not stand in the text, and it is by no means certain that they are implied. This regal state, for aught that appears to the contrary, may subsist in the invisible world. This conjunction with Christ in royal office and glory, is designed as a peculiar honor to such as have suffered death in the cause of religion, or have withstood the Beast. In this light it was regarded by the early Christians, and in hope of this glory, many coveted martyrdom.

Thirdly. At the close of this thousand years, the rest of the dead live again (ἀνέζησαν, revived). "This is the first resurrection." Rev. xx. 5. The general resurrection of the saints is here intended, as appears from the next verse,* and from 1 Thess. iv. 16—"The dead in Christ shall rise first." Though the martyrs precede the great multitude of God's people, by an interval of a thousand years, yet both are included in the first resurrection, which is so denominated, in reference to that of the ungodly, which is posterior.

Fourthly. Before the general resurrection of the saints, Satan must

* I am inclined to believe, that, in order to a correct reading of this passage, ver. 5, and the first clause of ver. 6, should be included in a parenthesis; and the words ἐπὶ τούτων, rendered *upon these*, relating to the martyrs mentioned ver. 4, "And they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.—5, (But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection.—6, Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection.) On these, ἐπὶ τούτων, the second death," &c.

be loosed a little season. During this space, his mischief shall be equal to his malice, now quickened by previous confinement. The whole earth shall suffer his dire tyranny; for "he shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth." The multitude of the enemies of Christ, shall be "as the sand of the sea;" their devastation universal. "They went up on the breadth of the earth." The spirit of persecution shall be rekindled. "They compassed the camp of the saints." But signal judgments shall cut them off in the midst of their pride and cruelty. "Fire came down from God, out of heaven, and devoured them." Rev. xx. 8, 9.

Here ends the book of time. Its history closes with the everlasting confusion of the prince of darkness, and the ruin of his kingdom forever and forever.

This final scene ushers in that day of days, when, in the fulness of omnipotence and majesty, Jesus, the Lord of all, shall judge the world, and bring to their consummation and issue all the concerns of his terrestrial kingdom. "Then shall the wise shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever." Then "every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess" that he who wept in Gethsemane, who bowed his head on Calvary and died, who sacrificed his life for the sins of a guilty world, is the Lord of the universe, and the Conqueror of Death and Hell.

These are the "times of the restitution of all things," signified by the apostle Peter, Acts iii. 21; the times of the new heaven and the new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness, which is the last event predicted in the sacred oracles.

Thus far the word of prophecy conducts us as to the remotest shores of time, and leaves us to gaze, with sublime wonder, upon the boundless ocean of an unknown eternity, whose ages, like wave succeeding wave, shall roll in perpetual course, each bearing on its bosom scenes of existence and action known only to Him who fills the universe with his presence, and lives throughout endless duration.

Concerning the latter glory of Christ's kingdom, many have inquired, "When shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of his coming?" To this question it is impossible to render a definite answer, because the time is not revealed. How near, or how remote, no human investigator can declare. Yet this period approaches with a certainty that is founded upon the evidence of divine truth, and indicated by many of those great occurrences which are now transpiring in various parts of the earth. Of these it may serve our purpose to mention but two.

First. The diffusion of *Christian knowledge*. "Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." Dan. xii. 4. The present age remarkably fulfils this prediction. What zeal is exhibited by almost every denomination of Christians to convey the light of revelation into all inhabited regions, and to plant the cross in the most

distant corners of each hemisphere! We may, as it were, daily mark the course of gospel truth, traversing our globe with silent, slow and certain progress, like the morning rays of the sun, whose rising creates our day, and whose beams enliven the face of nature. All these exertions cannot be ineffectual; they must be followed, ultimately, by some grand result. The circle of Christian influence will be enlarged, and in proportion to its enlargement, its motion will be accelerated, until "the knowledge of God shall fill the earth as the waters cover the face of the sea."

Secondly. The *effusion* of the *Holy Ghost*. "And it shall come to pass, in the last days, (saith God,) I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams. And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out, in those days, of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy." Acts ii. 17, 18. These words of the prophet Joel, applied by Peter to the circumstances of the day of Pentecost, certainly have regard to a more distant period; for many predictions of scripture, like this, admit of a two-fold interpretation. The gift of the Holy Ghost is the peculiar privilege of the gospel dispensation. Hence, it cannot be doubted, that, as the kingdom of Christ advances, the Holy Spirit will reveal himself more copiously and more powerfully. Superior light and numerous gifts will be dispensed to the saints; while the effects of divine influence will appear in the zeal and labor of God's people. But does the present age afford any indication of these things? We may answer, Yes.

It is not a century since the revival of the doctrine of the *work* and *witness* of the Spirit in the heart. "What darkness must have covered the earth, and gross darkness the people," when, prior to this time, ceremonial trumpery and formal professions constituted the religion of the day, and when the internal presence and operations of the Holy Spirit were considered both as unnecessary and unattainable. But now, how altered is the face of the Christian world! This doctrine, so essential to vital godliness, is daily and rapidly gaining advocates among all denominations. We, as a people, have been distinguished, from our first origin, for an inviolable attachment to this tenet; but should this ever cease, our name shall truly become, *Ichabod*, "the glory is departed;" for nothing more certainly tends to fatal declension from every Christian grace and duty, than to undervalue and reject the presence and power of the Holy Spirit.

Another circumstance to strengthen our position is, that the propagation of gospel truths, and the labor of bringing souls to Christ, are not confined to ministers of the word alone; but pious and enlightened lay-members of the church engage in this work with a degree of

success, that proves it to be in the order of God, and one of the most effectual means of promoting the Redeemer's kingdom.

Having extended our observations on this subject to considerable length, we shall now conclude with a few reflections and inferences.

1. With what confidence may we offer this petition, "Thy kingdom come," indited, as it is, by the lips of Him, whose throne is founded in wisdom, power and goodness, and who, by inspiring this prayer, has taught us to expect its fulfilment; for every prayer, divinely suggested, has in its origin a sure pledge of a divine answer.

2. While, with lively expectation and laborious zeal, we hasten to the day of Christ, is there not some danger of our neglecting to receive or retain the kingdom of Christ in our own hearts? Strangely different from the wisdom of the gospel, is the wisdom of those, who in this day of Christian enterprise and exertion, are endeavoring to win souls to God, and are even employing a great portion of their time and substance, to send the word of life to the extremes of either continent, but who have never yet entertained that degree of anxiety, for their own spiritual safety and welfare, which constitutes the true penitent, and subjects the soul to Christ. It requires little or no religion to be zealous in a popular cause, especially if that cause be a good one; but much, very much, to suppress the tyranny of sin, and to yield up the entire soul to the dominion of holy love.

3. The true dignity of the faithful is discovered in their relation to the kingdom of Christ. For the kingdom, being of a heavenly nature, far transcends all earthly examples of pomp and power, and embraces in its grand and eternal scheme the saints of the Most High, "of whom," in the words of the apostle Paul, "the world is not worthy." To superficial observers, neither the character of Christ, nor that of his followers, presents any thing comely or desirable; but in the light of inspiration, supreme dignity and excellence beam forth from the person of our Divine Head, and are reflected upon his disciples. And though obscured by temporal relations, as to their present worth, yet a future scene shall disclose it, when, honored and exalted by their master, "the righteous shall shine as the sun in the kingdom of their Father."

4. Do we not discover in the millennium a direct answer to that once deistical but now universalian objection, "That, in asserting the dangerous state of the impenitent, we ascribe more power and success to Satan in the ruin of men, than to Christ in their salvation?" As things now are, there are, to all appearance, "few that be saved,"—few, very few, in the way of salvation. The great mass of mankind lies under the dark and direful tyranny of the god of this world. But that this will always be the case, we will dare to deny. When Satan shall fall, as lightning from heaven, and his kingdom shall be suddenly and universally ruined, the gospel of liberty shall be proclaimed to

these captives, and the race of Adam, long oppressed, shall all come under the mild dominion of the King of kings; and what may we not expect to be the mighty gathering of souls to Christ, when the deserts of Africa, then fertilized by the dews of heaven; the vast plains of Central and Northern Asia, then warmed by the reviving beams of a more genial sun; when the immense and unexplored interiors of North and South America, together with all the islands of the ocean, shall teem with numerous millions, who, as with one voice, shall acknowledge Christ the Lord!

5. The practical influence which the prospect of this kingdom should have upon us, is finely expressed by the apostle Paul: "Wherefore, we receiving a kingdom that cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear." Heb. xii. 28. Other kingdoms may be dislodged from their foundations; but this is immovable and permanent. Contrasted with the perpetual change of human affairs, it exhibits the glory of its Founder, who is "the same yesterday, to-day and forever." And how forcibly does this reflection impress the mind, when, through the obscurity of ancient times, we trace the rise and ruin of mighty empires; when we survey those ponderous remains which, having survived the assaults of time, and of the elements, and of man, more destructive than either, seem like the productions of some superior race of beings; and when with these views we connect the convulsions of nations, the ravages of conquest, and the transfer of dominion from one people to another! Such has been the course of human events, and nothing appears to be perpetual but change. Thus also, in the lapse of time, the most illustrious kingdoms of the present day shall, in their turn, decline, and sink, and perish. But thy throne, O God, is eternal. No enemy can interrupt, no period terminate, thy reign. For "thine is the kingdom the power and the glory, forever and forever." Amen.

SERMON XIX.

Delivered at the Welsh Methodist Chapel, Aldersgate Street, London, on Sunday Afternoon, January 22, 1832.

BY KAHKEWAQUONABY, OR PETER JONES,
A CONVERTED INDIAN CHIEF.

"Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God." MATT. v. 8.

My Christian brothers and sisters, we are gathered together here this afternoon to worship the great God who is the Creator and Maker of us all. This great God now looks down upon every one of us, and sees what is in each of our hearts.

It behoves us, then, my Christian brothers and sisters, as we are the creatures of this Great Spirit, to worship him in spirit and in truth, while we are before him, and to lift up our hearts and our prayers to him that he may come down and bless us with his presence this afternoon.

I am very glad to meet with you, my Christian brothers and sisters, and to worship with you the true and living God, who is your God and my God—your Saviour and my Saviour. I feel glad in my heart that the Great Spirit has given us one religion—one faith—one baptism; and that, although we may assemble together of different nations, of different languages, of different complexions, yet there is only one God—one Saviour—the Saviour of us all.

Before I proceed to make some remarks on this passage of the word of God, I think it necessary to tell you who I am and what the Lord has done for my own soul. You are all aware that I am from America. I was born and brought up in the woods of Upper Canada. It was there the Great Spirit gave me my being; and in early life I was taught in all the manners and customs of the people to which I belong. But it may be necessary, my Christian brothers and sisters, to inform my Welsh brothers and sisters belonging to this chapel, that I am in part a Welshman. On my father's side I am a Welshman,

but on my mother's side I am a Chippewese Indian. My grandfather, on my father's side, emigrated from Wales; he became connected with the natives of Upper Canada, and my mother was a Chippewese Indian of the Messissagwehd, or Eagle tribe. But I was not brought up in my early days in the Christian religion; my mother being a complete and perfect heathen, I was taught by her in all the manners and customs of the people to which she belonged. I did not begin to learn the English language until I was about fifteen years old, and that above fourteen years ago, when my father sent me to an English school. From that time I began to learn your language, and that is the reason that I am enabled to speak to you a little in the English tongue. But my labors are principally confined to my countrymen, the Chippewese Indians, and I preach to them in the Chippewese language. I only occasionally attempt to preach in the English language, and I believe I have spoken the English language more since I have been in this country than ever I did before in all my life.

Having made these few remarks, my Christian brothers and sisters, by way of introducing myself to my Welsh friends in this place, I will now proceed to make some remarks from the word of the Great Spirit written in the Gospel by St. Matthew, the fifth chapter and eighth verse: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

These words, my Christian brothers and sisters, were spoken by the Lord Jesus Christ himself when he was here upon earth, and they form part of that sermon which he preached upon the Mount. He spoke these words, my Christian friends, for the good of the people who were then present, and also for the good of all people who should hereafter worship him and keep his commandments. We have great reason, my Christian brothers and sisters, to be thankful to God that our Saviour ever delivered his sermon, which is called his Sermon on the Mount; for we find that the whole sum and substance of the Christian religion is contained in it. Here we find our duty to the Great Spirit as our Creator—how we ought to love him, how we ought to keep his commandments, and to worship him in spirit and in truth; and here we also learn our duty towards one another, how we ought to love one another, how we ought to pray for one another—how we ought to labor to bring our fellow creatures to the knowledge and love of the true and living God. The whole substance, then, of our Lord's discourse, is love to God and love to one another; which, if we do, we shall save our souls alive.

In making a few remarks from these words, you will be pleased to suffer me, in the first place, to notice the character of the pure in heart; and then to show, in the second place, how or in what sense they see God; for it is said, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." And I hope, my Christian brothers and sisters, that you will pray for me while I attempt to speak to you; for in vain

shall I attempt to speak unless the Spirit of God assist me, and in vain shall you attempt to hear unless the Great Spirit himself give you the hearing ear and the good heart. Let us all pray, then, for one another, that the light of the Great Spirit of truth may come into our hearts, and enable us, with seriousness and much profit, to meditate on those great and important subjects that relate to the saving of our souls. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." We have here, then,

First, THE CHARACTERS SPOKEN OF—"the pure in heart." We are led to see, when we read these words, that the text presupposes that man is not "pure in heart" naturally, otherwise, our Saviour would not have said, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." No; man in the state of nature is unholy, impure in heart; the word of Christ does not dwell in him—from the crown of his head to the sole of his foot he is altogether polluted and sinful—out of his heart proceeds all manner of wickedness, all manner of evil thoughts. This is the actual state of all who are living in their sins—their hearts are unholy, their lives are unholy, their actions are unholy; they travel in the broad way that leadeth to everlasting destruction. We are led to believe this important truth from what we see with our eyes of the depravity of man, as well as from what we know of our own selves; when in the state of nature, unregenerate, out of Christ, we were wicked and sinful, and walking in the wrong way, in the path of sin and vice. All who walk in the crooked way, my dear friends, are travelling to that dreadful place where there shall be weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth forever and ever. But it is not necessary for me to dwell on this part of the subject; I leave it with you to meditate upon.

I proceed, then, to notice the character of the "pure in heart." In the first place, it may be necessary for me to say, that it is possible for us sinful creatures to be made pure in heart, by the power of the Spirit of God. It is possible for us to be saved from our sins, to be washed in the blood of Christ, and to be cleansed from all unrighteousness. We find it recorded in this good book, that "without holiness" of heart, "no man shall see God;" and it is also said, "This is the will of God—even our sanctification," that we should have the Spirit of God.

The manner and way in which a man is sanctified and made pure in heart, you all are perfectly acquainted with. You all know, that in order to be pure in heart, a man must feel the pardon of his sins, he must be convinced of the error of his ways—by repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, he must experience these blessings. Happy will it be, if all now in this place hearing me, will seek and find them, to the joy of their hearts.

Our Lord himself describes the pure in heart in this chapter. The pure in heart are those who are poor in spirit—those who feel that

they are poor sinners, that they need the mercy of God, that they need the help of God to lead them in the right way; and this seems the first step towards having a clean heart, to be poor in spirit. And the next thing that is necessary, is to seek after this important blessing —to be meek and lowly in heart, to enjoy that mind which was in Christ Jesus our blessed Redeemer. The pure in heart, then, are those who have forsaken their crooked ways—who have forsaken their evil ways, and have laid hold on the good way, through the Lord Jesus Christ. The pure in heart are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness—they are the merciful, loving one another, desiring to help one another in the good way—they are the peace-makers, who desire to promote peace and good-will among the children of men. Such are the pure in heart. In short, my Christian brothers and sisters, the pure in heart are those that love God with all their hearts, and their neighbors as themselves. This is the sum and substance of what is included in the character—love to God and love to one another. Without this, all is darkness and error.

I might tell you, my dear friends, that the poor Indians are in a state of nature—they are unholy, they know not God, their hearts are darkened, their minds are darkened, they know not the Great Spirit, they go on in the crooked way, their works are sinful, their hearts are polluted, the God of this world hath blinded their minds, and they worship things that are no gods; they worship the sun, the moon, and the stars—they believe in incantations, and are cruel to those that they imagine have hurt them by their witchcraft—they are unholy in heart and in life.

And this is the case also, even in this country, with those who have not the love of God shed abroad in their hearts. Not only is it the character of the Indians, that they are far away from God, but all—whether in America, in the islands of the sea, in Asia, in Europe, in England, or Ireland—who have not the spirit of Christ, are in a bad way; the love of God is not in them—they are none of his—they belong to another, even to the spirit of darkness that worketh in them.

Allow me, my Christian friends, to notice, in the second place, in what sense the characters thus described see God—"Blessed are the pure in heart," says our Saviour, "for they shall see God." The pure in heart see God, in the first place, in the works of creation. Those who love God, who have the spirit of God dwelling in them, see God in the works of creation; for when they open their eyes upon the world, upon the sun, the moon, the stars, the cattle on the hills, the fowls of the air, they are led to contemplate the Great Spirit who made them all. The pure in heart see God in the works of creation —they are led to believe that this world came into being not by chance, as some men would make us believe, they are led to believe that man cannot make any thing which he sees, he is led to believe that man lives and moves by the Great Spirit—that it is God that helps

him to raise his head, that helps him to walk—he sees that it was God that made him and all the nations of the earth.

I pity the infidel who denies the being of a God, because I think if any rational man were to open his eyes and look around him, he would be convinced that there was some superior Being, that exists, and who made all things that he beholds. Even the Indians—my poor countrymen—believe in the existence of a Great Spirit, simply by the works of creation, although they do not see him in the sense in which the pure in heart see him. They have confused notions of the Great Spirit, but they believe that there is a Great Spirit who has made all things. How they are to worship that Great Spirit they know not, because they have not the Bible, this good book; they have no missionaries, no ministers to tell them how they ought to worship him, how they ought to believe in him and keep his commandments.

Again: My dear brethren, the pure in heart see God in his providences. All who love God see him in the providential care he exercises over his people. They see that it is God who provides them with the clothing they wear—they see that it is God who feeds them with the food they eat—they see that it is God who preserves their lives, and saves them from sudden destruction. They see God also in his cross providences—in afflictions and in trials—very often the pure in heart see God even in the loss of their dear and near friends and relatives; for instance, a father loses his beloved child, but he sees it is designed for his good, and he sees God even in his afflictions. The pure in heart see God in the many deliverances which they experience. We are in a world of danger, exposed to innumerable casualties—dangers encompass us on the right hand and the left, our lives are continually in hazard; but the Great Spirit safely leads us through them all, and guides us in the way we should go. Thus the pure in heart see God in all his providences.

Again: My dear brethren, the pure in heart see God in the atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ. Here they see God manifest in the flesh. Although we have gone away from our Father by our wicked ways, yet he has "so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him might not perish, but have everlasting life." This Saviour came down from heaven and brought salvation with him; and the pure in heart see God in a spiritual point of view, in the redemption thus purchased for us by the Lord Jesus Christ.

The pure in heart, moreover, see God in all the doctrines and ordinances of our Saviour Jesus Christ. They see God in all these things—in the amazing love of God to the children of men, in the humanity of his Son, in his divinity, in his sufferings, in his death, and in all the doctrines and ordinances that he has instituted, in the preaching of the word—every man that loves God, when he hears the preacher, the good mis-

sionary preaching and exhibiting the Lord Jesus Christ upon the pole of the gospel, sees God exhibited in a spiritual point of view before his eyes. The pure in heart see God in the ordinances of baptism and the holy communion, when they sit down at the table of the Lord, and partake of the broken body and drink of his shed blood in remembrance of the sufferings and death of our Lord Jesus Christ.

But more than this—the pure in heart see God in the triumphant death of the saints of God. How often, my Christian brothers and sisters, have you been made to rejoice when you have been called to behold your friends or acquaintances, at the hour of death, rejoicing in the God of their salvation—dying in the triumph of faith, and going home to their Father's house rejoicing. The pure in heart see God in that way.

But, lastly, the pure in heart shall see God in glory—see him in our Father's house, where they shall behold him as he is, without any veil, without looking through any cloud—they shall see Jesus as he is—they shall behold all the good people, their friends who have gone up into heaven,—Englishmen, Welshmen, Scotchmen, Irishmen,—they shall meet the converted Indians, my countrymen, who have loved the Lord Jesus Christ—they shall see the poor Africans who have died in faith and washed themselves white in the blood of the Lamb. "Blessed," then, "are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

They are blessed, my Christian friends, because they enjoy the love of God on earth; their peace is made with God—they walk in the Spirit, his light shines into their hearts—they follow after the will of God, they enjoy the peace of God—this love is shed abroad in their hearts. And they are blessed, because they shall be eternally happy in glory. Oh, that we all, my Christian friends, may enjoy these great and precious blessings, and be enabled to rejoice in the Great Spirit who has brought these things within our reach!

Having made these few remarks with respect to this great and important subject, which our Saviour himself has delivered to us, allow me to give you a short account of the great work which the Lord is doing for the American Indians from whom I come. These poor Indians, my Christian friends, are in a state of nature—they know not God—they get drunk and do a great many wicked things—they know not where their souls are going, they know not the Saviour, they know not the way to heaven—they are in the crooked way. But I am happy to tell you, that some eight or nine years ago, the Lord visited us in the woods—he sent missionaries among us, and we heard this good word; the Lord applied it by his good Spirit to our hearts, showed us that we were sinners, that we needed mercy; we then called upon this Great Spirit to give us mercy—he heard our prayer—he answered our cry—he understood the language of our hearts, although we called upon him in the Chippeway tongue—he took away our old wicked hearts,

and gave us new hearts; and before I left my country, there were more than twelve hundred who were walking in the good path and in the comforts of the Holy Ghost. Some of these have already died happy in the Lord, and have gone home to glory. We have witnessed with our own eyes, and heard with our own ears, the testimony which some of them have given on their death-beds: they were going, they said, to be with Christ—to see him as he is, and to dwell with the Great Spirit forever and ever.

And I am also glad to tell you, that, since the Lord hath visited us in mercy, we are now collecting together into settlements and villages; that in these villages we have small chapels, where we meet to worship the Great Spirit; we have our class-meetings and our prayer-meetings—the missionaries preach to us, and the Great Spirit himself condescends to come down and to bless us; for he is every where present—in the woods of Canada, in this country, over the great waters, in all places; wherever I be I may pray to him, and he will hear and answer me.

And I may also tell you, that we now commence tilling the ground, planting corn and potatoes, and begin to enjoy the comforts of this life. So we have found there, that "godliness is profitable unto all things, having the promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come; and that when we "seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness," all other things are given to us. When you give a man Jesus, you give along with him every other good blessing.

I rejoice, my Christian brothers and sisters, that we received the gospel from the hands of the white people, and of Englishmen. My heart is often made very glad, when I think that the Great Spirit, having blessed you with the light of Christianity, we also, through you, have been made to share in its blessings. Had you not received the gospel, had you not been Christians, had you not enjoyed the spirit of God, where would I have been, and where would my poor countrymen have been? We should have been still all in darkness, still walking in the broad and crooked way that leadeth to destruction; but blessed be God that we have received the gospel at your hands! You have not been stingy with your religion—you have been willing to impart it to others, and to bring them into the way that leads to eternal life.

You will be glad to know that it is the desire of my poor countrymen to walk after you—to follow your good example—to worship your God—to call your people their people—that they may be one in Christ Jesus, that they may sit down by your side in our Father's house, where all shall unite to praise him forever and ever. O, my Christian friends, pray that this good work may still continue to go on—pray that we may be kept in the right way, adorning the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things. And may God bless you and your children, and make you all the happy subjects of his saving power, for Christ's sake. Amen.

SERMON XX.

Delivered at City Road Chapel, London, on Sunday Evening, April 7, 1832, in aid of the Funds of the Methodist Sunday Schools.

BY KAHKEWAQUONABY, OR PETER JONES,
A CONVERTED INDIAN CHIEF.

"Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course and be glorified, even as it is with you." 2 THESS. iii. 1.

My Christian brothers and sisters, we are here this evening before the presence of the Great Spirit, who looks down from heaven, and who sees what is in every heart. This great God, my Christian brothers and sisters, requires every one of us to worship him in spirit and in truth; and unless we worship him in this way, our coming together in this place will not be of any good to our souls. I therefore exhort every one of you who has named the name of Christ, to raise up your hearts in prayer that God may send down his blessing among you; that he may open your hearts to receive the good Spirit, and that he may help me to speak to you to-night all those truths which relate to the salvation of your immortal souls. While you are praying for yourselves, my Christian friends, I earnestly solicit also an interest in your prayers, that the Lord Jesus Christ may help me to speak boldly, that I may not fear the face of clay, but speak boldly the words of the Great Spirit—looking upon all of you as dying men and women, that must shortly appear before the bar of that great God, as well as myself; for we are all accountable beings for the manner in which we worship at this time.

I feel glad, my Christian friends, that I have had another opportunity of meeting with you in this place, and to worship with you, before I take my leave of you; and as I expect in a very few days to leave your great city, I have thought it advisable to select a subject from the word of God that would lead me to make some general remarks applicable to such an occasion. I have, therefore, taken this verse in the

third chapter of the Second Epistle of Paul to the Thessalonians:—"Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course and be glorified, even as it is with you." These words, my Christian friends, were written by the apostle Paul to the Thessalonians, and it appears that the object which the apostle had, was to encourage those Christians to grow in grace, and to become stronger and stronger, to do the will of the Great Spirit, and also that they might have more correct ideas of the right road that leads to heaven—that they might know more of the Great Spirit—that they might feel more of his power in their hearts, so that they might be enabled to worship him with their whole heart. And it appears, my Christian friends, that the apostle had great confidence in these Thessalonians; he knew that they were good Christians; and that they wanted to know all about the Christian religion; that they wanted to know all about the Saviour—what he did for them; and they wished to walk as the children of the light—to love God, and to love one another. The apostle had this confidence in these Christians, of their sincerity, and of their devotedness to the cause of God, of their zeal and faith, as to desire them to pray for him and for those who at that time were around him; therefore he writes and tells them, in the words I have just read to you, that they might pray for him; and he gives them the reason why they should pray for him—"that the word of the Lord might have free course and be glorified, even as it was among them," at Thessalonica. Now, as I have already said to you, my Christian brothers and sisters, I have selected these words, to make from them a few remarks; first, with respect to the prayers of Christians, and then to show the reason why Christians should pray, and, especially, why Christians should pray for us, the Indians in the woods of Canada. And I shall endeavor to express the feelings which are in my heart, with respect to what I have seen and heard since I have been among you in this country.

First, then, As to the duty of Christians to pray. The Great Spirit, my Christian friends, has ordered and commanded, that all persons, all people of every nation and in every land, should pray; and he has made it known in this good book, that there is no other way of obtaining the favor and mercy of the Great Spirit, but only by prayer and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. But it is a great thing, my Christian friends, to know how to pray aright, so that our prayers may be accepted by the Great Spirit whom we worship. This good book tells me, and I believe, that many people pray with their mouths, but their hearts are far from the Great Spirit; and, therefore, it is serious and very important, that every one of us should know what kind of prayer the great God will receive, and what kind of prayer he will answer.

You all know, my Christian friends, better than I do, the nature

of prayer. I find, my Christian friends, that the kind of prayer which the Great Spirit hears and answers in the woods of Canada, is that prayer that comes out of the heart; and I have, moreover, heard that the Great Spirit does not only listen to the words which we speak, but that he knows the desire that is in the heart. Sometimes we pray in the woods: we fall down upon our knees by the side of a tree, or in the wigwam, and we simply raise up our hearts to the Great Spirit, without speaking any words, without calling aloud; and then we have found that the Great Spirit did know what was in our hearts; he could see that we desired certain blessings in our hearts, and he heard and blessed our souls. At other times we have prayed in the woods, and called upon him aloud. We pray with our mouths, and when the words come from the heart, which we speak to the Great Spirit, while we ask him to take away the old wicked heart, and give us new hearts,—he hears our prayer and answers us; and he takes away the old wicked heart, and gives us new hearts.

You see, then, my Christian friends, that the prayer which the Great Spirit loves proceeds from the heart, and not from the words merely which we utter. Our Saviour, you know, told some of the people in his day, that the Pharisees made long prayers and stood in the corners of streets and public places, and made very long prayers, and talked a very great deal about their goodness—how often they fasted—and how much good they did to the poor; but the Great Spirit did not hear that kind of prayer, because it did not arise out of the heart; they prayed in order that they might be seen of men—that men might hear their prayers. They did not direct their prayer to the Great Spirit, but they directed their prayer to the ears of men; that men might call them good—that they might have the applause of this poor little world; and their prayers were abominable in the sight of the Great Spirit.

It is a very good thing, my Christian friends, to pray to the Great Spirit: prayer is the life of the soul of a Christian. Every true Christian prays, and loves to pray, and he prays what is in his heart. Without prayer the soul will become cold and dead. But he that prays in spirit and in truth, shall find his heart live, and grow, and flourish—he shall know more and more of the mind of the Great Spirit—he shall renew his strength—he shall run and not be wearied—he shall walk and not faint; while he has good, true, sincere prayer in his heart, his soul shall live in the enjoyment of the love of God. But oh, my Christian friends, we have deeply to lament how weak our prayers are very often—how cold and how careless are they frequently! How often do we kneel down before the Great Spirit and utter words, and while we are asking him to do this or that thing for us, we, at the same time, do not believe that these things will be done for us! This, my Christian friends, is mocking the Great Spirit. The prayer which the Great Spirit hears, is the prayer which is offered up in faith.

We are to believe, when we pray, that the Great Spirit hears us, and that he is able and willing to do for us the things that we ask him, otherwise we had as well hold our tongues.

Prayer, my Christian friends, will help us to see wondrous things out of God's book: prayer is that which will raise up our hearts to things above; prayer is that which will plant for us the ladder of Jacob—it will take us up to glory. Prayer, accompanied by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, is that kind of prayer which the Lord hears and answers in the woods of Canada. It does not, I find, my Christian friends, make any difference with the Great Spirit, in what kind of language we pray. You, in your own country, pray in English; the Great Spirit understands English; and when you pray in sincerity and in truth, he hears and answers your prayer, and he gives you the things that you ask; we, in the woods of Canada, pray in the Chippewa tongue; and, blessed be his name, the Great Spirit understands that as well as the English tongue, and he hears us when we pray in our native language. God understands all languages, for he made all languages; he made us all, we are all his children; he it is that watches over us—he takes care of us, and he holds us up every day of our lives; he rules over all in the world—he governs all things according to his own will, and all the nations of the earth are his!

Now, the design of prayer, my Christian friends, is to bring us nearer to God. God has commanded us to pray that we might approach him in that way; and in approaching him by prayer he has promised to draw nigh to us. If we draw nigh to him, the Great Spirit will come and meet with us, and do us good. The design of prayer is also to teach us to know how weak we are, and that we may feel our entire dependence on the Great Spirit. The more a man prays, the more he sees his own weakness—the more he feels that he himself cannot do any thing; and that all the good he has, all the blessings he receives, come from the Great Spirit. The design of prayer also is, that in feeling our dependence on the Great Spirit seeing ourselves to be poor sinners, we may come to Jesus Christ, and say to him, "God be merciful to me, a sinner!" "Save, Lord, or I perish!" We should come to God in this way; and in calling upon the Great Spirit through Jesus Christ, he will change our hearts, convert our souls, take away all evil dispositions out of us, and give us clean hearts—hearts that will delight to serve, and honor, and please him.

That God does hear and answer prayer you all very well know, my Christian friends. You who have experienced a change of heart—you who have found the Lord to be gracious, know that he hears and answers prayer. You recollect the time when your heart was very sick and sorry on account of sin—you recollect the time when you wept for your sins—when you struggled for the blessing—when you called on the Great Spirit; and all at once, when you fell at his feet, when you prayed with all your heart to Jesus, the Great Spirit said

to you—"Poor sinner, go in peace; thy sins, which are many, are all forgiven thee!" and you experienced and felt in your hearts that the Lord had heard and answered your prayers, and granted you the desire of your hearts.

We have a great many instances of the answers to prayers recorded in this good book. The prophets, when in difficulties, prayed, and the Lord heard their prayer; they prayed for the people, and the Lord heard their prayer—they prayed for themselves, and the Lord heard their prayer; and in every country and nation the Lord hears prayer and answers it, and comes down and blesses his people. We, in the woods of Canada, have prayed, and the Lord has answered and fulfilled our prayers.

But, again, my Christian friends, it is not only necessary that we should pray for ourselves, but that we should pray for others; and the Great Spirit has been pleased to make it known to us, that if we pray for others he will hear us. Therefore St. Paul calls upon the Thessalonian Christians in the text, "Brethren, pray for us;" and I say in behalf of my countrymen in the woods of Canada, "Brethren, pray for us." Brethren, pray for ús, because God hears prayer—God has already answered your prayer; when you have prayed for the conversion of the poor Indians in the woods, the Great Spirit has answered you. You have prayed for your own friends and relations, and the Lord has converted your sons and your daughters—your brothers and your sisters, perhaps; God has heard your prayer in their behalf, and God will also hear your prayer when you pray for us poor Indians in the woods. "Brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course and be glorified, even as it is among you."

Now, the reason, my Christian friends, why I call upon you to pray for us, is this—we want the word of the Lord to run very swiftly among us. We are poor and we are needy—many of my brethren know nothing of this word of God; they know nothing about the Lord Jesus Christ—they are worshipping things that are no gods—they are worshipping the sun, the moon, and a great many other things; and these foolish gods have neither hands nor ears to do them good; they cannot hear their prayer—they cannot give them the things which they ask.

Another reason why we wish you to pray for us, my Christian friends, is, that many of my brethren are every year perishing for lack of knowledge; every year hundreds and thousands are dying off without knowing the Great Spirit, without hearing the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Oh, what a sad thing, my Christian brethren, is it, that the souls of those for whom Christ Jesus gave his most precious blood, should die without ever hearing of his name! Brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may run swiftly among us, before all heathens die off and be no more; for the Lord will save them, my friends, if

you pray, and cause his word to go very swiftly. Brethren, pray for us, that we may all become Christians—pray for us that we may be civilized—pray for us that we may become wise unto salvation—pray for us that we may all walk in the good way—that we may all walk after you, in your footsteps, in that way which leads to our Father's house above! "Brethren, pray for us." Pray that the Lord may raise up faithful laborers, and send them abroad into the woods of Canada. Pray, brethren, that the good work which has been commenced among us in the woods, may go on and prosper; so that all my native brethren, by hundreds and thousands, may all know the same God that you worship, acknowledge the same Saviour, and feel the same good Spirit, in their breasts.

I might tell you, my Christian friends, many things respecting the very miserable and wretched state in which my poor Indian brethren are, in order to excite you to pity us, and that your pity might lead you to pray for us. I will only say, that the Indians in the woods of Canada, who have not heard of the name of Jesus Christ, are in a most wretched and degraded state. They walk in darkness, and have not the light of life among them. They know not where their souls will go when they come to die; they are all blind, and thus, year after year, are they tumbling into the grave, not knowing at all whither their souls are going. Suffer me also to tell you, that those Indians who are not blessed with the gospel of Jesus Christ, wander about in the woods of Canada: they are very poor as respects the goods of this world; they live in wigwams, they eat nothing but what they kill by hunting and fishing; and this is a very poor living. Sometimes they get very hungry and cold; and sometimes they are even tired out to death; and in a great number of cases they suffer and are very poor, because they know not the blessings of the gospel of Jesus Christ, which would enlighten their minds, and which would lead them in the way in which they should go.

The Great Spirit, my Christian brethren, commands you to pray for us, so that the good work—the good religion—may be extended all over the world, and that all may be brought to know the Lord, from the least even unto the greatest. And as an encouragement that you should pray for us, suffer me, my Christian brothers and sisters, to state simply, in a very few words, what the great God has already done in answer to prayer, and through the efforts of his people among us. Nine years ago we were all blind—myself and my countrymen; but through the preaching of the word of God, and by the prayers of Christians—by your prayers, by the prayers of the Christians in America, myself and many of my brethren have been brought to know the Great Spirit, and to feel his love shed abroad in our hearts. Within nine years, more than twelve hundred have been blessed with the gospel of Jesus Christ. All these twelve hundred love Jesus; they try to pray wherever they go; and wherever the wigwam is placed, there the voice of prayer is

heard—prayer in their native language; and the Great Spirit hears their prayer. The Indians, my Christian brothers and sisters, pray for good hearts—they pray for the Holy Spirit to come into their hearts; they pray that they may be kept and preserved from all evil—from the devil—from wicked men—from their own wicked hearts—from whatever would lead them astray; and while they pray for these things, they also pray that the Good Spirit may give them the blessings of this life.—I will just relate to you one negro prayer, and how the Lord answered it. One negro came to us from the Grand River for the purpose of hearing of Jesus and the good way; and when he returned home, he found that all the provision he had left for his family was gone, and they had had nothing to eat or to drink for two days. As soon as he came home, early next morning, he took his gun and went into the woods to hunt. He first prayed in the morning that the Great Spirit might give him something to eat. That day he travelled all through the woods in searching for the deer, and he travelled till noon, but could come across no deer. He then prayed again that the Great Spirit might give him deer, and he went on, but he found no deer; and about the middle of the afternoon, he prayed again more fervently to the Great Spirit, that he might give him deer, and send him something to kill. He told me, that after he had thus prayed he rose up from his knees, and he looked, and he saw three deer standing close by him; so he took his gun, and he shot one of them on the spot, and he fell down on his knees and gave thanks to the Great Spirit for giving him the deer; and when he arose, he saw the other two deer standing not far off, so he loaded his gun and shot another of them; and then he ran and fell down on his knees again, and returned thanks to the Great Spirit; and when he rose up again, he saw the other deer, and he knew it, and he killed it also, and he rendered thanks to the Great Spirit for answering his prayer, and sending him the three deer. He told us this when we saw him, and he felt in his heart that the Great Spirit was the true God, who could answer the prayer and supply the wants of his people.

"Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course and be glorified, even as it is among you." This leads me, my dear Christian brethren, in the last place, to make a few remarks with respect to what I have seen and heard since I have come to your country; I shall try to express the feelings which are in my heart. It is but little more than one year since I left my brethren, to come over and shake hands with you; I did not come, my Christian friends, at my own desire, but at the desire of my brethren in the woods, and of the church to which I belong there. It is almost one year since I first landed on your shores; and since I have been in your country, I have travelled through a great many of your cities and towns. I will not take up your time in telling you the places which I have visited in this country; I will only tell you, my Christian friends, tha

when I first visited Liverpool, I was surprised to see the state of your country, especially the great edifices there, and the fine houses, and the beautiful hills, and the smooth roads, which I saw when we came along to this city; and I was also struck with the stone walls and with the hedge fences that I saw, for these things I had never seen before in my native land. I was also struck in seeing so many churches and chapels wherever I turned my eye. Surely, I thought, that this people were the people of God, that the Great Spirit dwelt among this people, and that he had done much for them. I arrived in this city, on the second day of May, and I attended your missionary meeting; I spoke a few words there; and, in a day or two afterwards, I attended the British and Foreign Bible Society meeting, and there I was surprised to see how good men would work themselves into all angry feelings when they talked about this good book, this word of the Great Spirit. I then attended several other meetings, and heard many good words spoken by your ministers, and by other gentlemen that attended them. Then I went to Bristol, where I was taken sick, and confined to my bed and my room for seven weeks, which nearly brought me to my grave. But the Great Spirit had mercy upon me; he raised me up, and suffered me to go to other places, and to shake hands with a great many good brothers and sisters in different parts of the island. I have seen, my Christian friends, that the Lord has highly favored you with all temporal blessings. I think that no people on earth have been so highly favored as you are with respect to temporal blessings; and I may also add that no other nation I have ever seen is more highly favored than you with respect to gospel privileges. You have a host of ministers who preach to you—you have plenty of chapels where you worship God, and plenty of churches in every direction; you have this good book, the word of the Great Spirit, among you—and you have your schools where your children are educated and taught in all the wisdom of this land—where they are instructed how to worship God, and how to be wise and good. In short, my Christian friends, you have every thing to make your souls happy and your bodies happy here, and to take you home to glory at last; and you have all this bestowed on you by the Great Spirit.

I have met with a great many good persons since I have been in this country, and the Lord has been so good to me as to cast my lot, in this place, chiefly among religious people. My heart has been made very glad to see how all the Christian people in this place rejoice when they hear of what the Great Spirit has done for my Indian brethren in America; and my heart has been made glad when I have heard their fervent prayers on our behalf, that the Lord would carry on the good work which has been begun, until all the Indians know the good Spirit and worship him from their hearts; but, my Christian friends, I am sorry to say, that while many of you enjoy the love of God in your hearts—while many of you live up to your privileges which the

Great Spirit has bestowed on you, I have seen a great many who seem to act and to live as if there were no God to worship—no heaven to gain—no hell to escape. I am sorry to say, that I have heard a great many people swearing, and seen a great many people drunk in the streets, as the poor Indians used to be before they knew there was a God to serve—before they had heard of the name of Jesus Christ. I am sorry to say, that many of your people care little about and profane the sabbath day; they run about, get drunk, and some sell fruits and fish, or one thing and the other, on the sabbath day. These things, my friends, ought not so to be in a Christian land; but I know that you feel in your hearts for them as well as I do. I am aware, my friends, that so long as there is a devil that reigns in the hearts of wicked men, and until the old serpent, the devil, shall be bound for a thousand years, these things will be seen by the children of men in all nations. But, oh, my Christian friends, while we see those around us who are walking in the crooked road that leads to death, we ought to pray for them, we ought to tell them what God has done; and even from the highways and hedges compel them to come into the house of the Great Spirit, that the house of the Lord may be filled with faithful hearers, such as shall be good, such as shall keep the commandments of the Great Spirit, and walk in the way that leads to heaven.

"Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course and be glorified, even as it is among you." My brethren in the woods of Canada and myself desire to enjoy the same blessings which you enjoy—we wish to walk in the same path in which you walk. I am now addressing myself to those who love the Lord Jesus Christ; and it is the desire of the hearts of my brethren, as well as my own desire, that we should have your God for our God, that we should have your Saviour for our Saviour; and that we should go on together, heart and hand, the Great Spirit conducting us in the right road, to the kingdom of God, there to dwell with him forever and ever.

I hope, my Christian friends, that you will pray for me and for my brethren: never get tired of praying for us, for the Lord will hear your prayers; and by your good wishes, and your prayers, and your efforts, hundreds and thousands of the Indians will be brought home to God. I shall now take my leave of you. I shall, I hope, return to my native land in a few months, and I shall be very happy in my heart to tell all my brethren the good words which I have heard—to tell them that you will pray for us, and to speak to them more perfectly of that Saviour who died for us, and gave himself a ransom for all. I shake hands with you all in my heart; I shall pray for you, and I hope that the Lord will bring us all at last to meet where we shall never part—where we shall see the Lord as he is, and where we shall praise him forever and forever. This is all I have to say.

EXTRACT FROM A SERMON,

Delivered at the New King-Street Chapel, Bath, on Friday Evening, September 21, 1832.

BY REV. JACOB STANLEY, SEN.

"He shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe." 2 THESSALONIANS, i. 10.

The coming of Christ is the grand object of God's revelation, from the beginning to the end of it. The very first revelation made to fallen man, respected the coming of Christ in the flesh: "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shall bruise his heel." The expectation of this promise was kept alive by a succession of prophecies and typical institutions and typical persons; and then, when Christ came in the flesh, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, the church's faith and hope were directed to his spiritual coming; after that he should leave the world—to the spiritual manifestation of the Son of God; to which all religious life, every conversion to God, every degree of Divine comfort, and every measure of Divine power—all spiritual blessings are to be traced. The good which is done is only done by the operation of the Spirit of Christ, which he told his disciples, when he left the world, was to convince of sin and righteousness and judgment to come, to teach you all things, and to bring all things to your remembrance, and to take of the things which are his, which he purchased with his own blood, and then gave them unto us. And then, when the spiritual dispensation was opened in all its fulness—when the apostles and disciples of Christ had experienced the fulfilment of that promise—then the other coming of Christ became the hope of the church; and that is the coming referred to in the text.

But he shall come a second time, as it regards his bodily presence, "without sin"—without a sin-offering—"unto salvation." And then all the typical effects as well as the moral effects of the fall, shall be done away with, as regards all that shall have believed; for death, the death of the body, and the spiritual death, and the punishment consequent upon sin, shall be destroyed, in reference to every member of Christ's mystical body

"He shall come." When this event shall take place we know not. Many have ventured, indeed, to predict the exact time of his coming; but all those who have ever assumed the character of prophet on this subject, have hitherto been out of their calculation; and we venture to say, that all their successors in prophecy will be equally so; for "of that day and hour knoweth no man." We know it will be a sudden event; the time will be unexpected; and hence our Lord tells us, that "as it was in the days of Noah, even so it shall be at the coming of the son of man." And how was it then? "They were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage"—minding earthly things, and earthly things only; when suddenly the rains descended, and the fountains of the great deep were broken up. And when Christ shall come, he tells us, it will be like this: there will then be found much unbelief, much infidelity prevailing even at that time.

The personal coming of Christ, at the time referred to in our text, will be visible to all. As it regards the spiritual coming of Christ, we can refuse to direct our eyes towards it. We cannot help the light shining on us; but we have the awful power of shutting our eyes against the light—a power which sinful man generally uses to his own destruction; but there will be no power whatever to shut our eyes against Christ when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, for "every eye shall see him, and they also that pierced him shall wail because of him." That foolish, wicked atheist shall see him: that man who denies that Christ ever spoke to his creatures in this Book shall see him; that man who has held the truth in unrighteousness, who has professed an orthodox creed while he has been living the life of a profligate, shall see him: that hypocrite who wears a mask, and has done it all the days of his life, passing himself off for a Christian, which he knows he is not, shall see him: the wonderful believer in Christ shall see and wonder, and love and adore.

"He shall come;" and the coming of Christ will be a source of indescribable joy or anguish, according to the condition of the beholders. To all those that love Christ his coming will be most delightful. "They love his appearance," the Apostle says. They loved his appearance when on earth: for what was it made their hearts rejoice more than when their oil and their corn and their

wine increased? It was the manifestation of his presence that made them happy. They had this; and though they were very poor and afflicted and persecuted, some of them, yet they were happy as Christians. Christ, "the hope of glory," manifested himself in them, and caused them to rejoice "with joy unspeakable and full of glory." Well, then, those who loved him while here below, and who had often desired to see him, longed to see him face to face—they shall behold that Saviour to whom they owe their all—all their hope, all their consolation, all their salvation. When they see him it will be productive of happiness indescribable, because they shall see him under circumstances of absolute security. *Here* we are not secure; *here* the best, the holiest men on earth may offend; *here* we may "draw back upon perdition: but *there* there shall be no more death nor sorrow; *there* there shall be no more fear; for having once entered into that house they shall go no more out for ever; once saved, eternally saved! once in glory, eternally in glory! To behold the Saviour under such circumstances cannot fail to fill them with unutterable bliss.

But oh, how awful, how distressing, how inexpressible must be the feelings of those who would not come to Christ—who would not have him to reign over them—who, instead of loving him, despised his principles and his ordinances, and his people! They will see him when he comes. The influence of the punishment of annihilation, we have been told, is next in order to eternal damnation; but I cannot believe it is so bad as eternal damnation. But though horrible, the wicked will desire it; they will desire to be annihilated; they will "call to the rocks and to the hills to fall on them, and to hide them from the presence of Him who sitteth upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb." Oh, how dreadful! Oh, that they had called on Him who died to save them, and who strove to save them, and who did all that Omnipotence could do with moral agents to save them; but they would not be saved. To behold Him coming for the purpose of publicly adjudging them to everlasting perdition, must wring their hearts with an anguish too great for human conception. God grant that we may never know what it is by experience? We know that many, very many, will perish: the Bible has revealed this, and we do not conceal it: and if those perish who have sat under the ministry of the Gospel of mercy, their perdition will be no common perdition. Oh, the hell of those who die unsaved under the Christian dispensation! Better for them had they received their existence in some of the dark places of the earth which are full of the habitations of cruelty. * * * * * * * *

SERMON XXI.

THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT.

BY REV. DANIEL FILLMORE,
OF THE NEW ENGLAND CONFERENCE.

'But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.' GALATIANS v. 22, 23.

It is a great thing to be a Christian. It is to be feared that many deceive themselves with false hopes; and will be found wanting when weighed in the balance. 'Not every one that saith, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that *doeth* the will of God.' The great head of the church has given us marks and evidences, by which to examine ourselves, so that none *need* be deceived in a concern of such vast importance: and we cannot too *frequently* and *rigidly*, try ourselves by *this* test of experience and character. 'Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves.'

There are *two* principal evidences, by which we may determine whether we are Christians, and heirs to the heavenly inheritance. The *first*, is the witness of the divine Spirit with our spirit. This is an inward consciousness of the pardon of sin, and acceptance with God through faith in Jesus Christ. It is independent of all *outward* circumstances, and is sometimes enjoyed by the believer, before an opportunity presents to show its fruit to the world.

The *second*, is the fruit of the Spirit. Those heavenly tempers and dispositions, which follow the work of justification; and that holy and blameless life, by which others can judge of a work of grace, and the state of the heart. This is inseparably connected with evangelical faith; and without it, all our hopes are vain. 'If any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his.' He does not belong to Christ, consequently cannot be an heir of his salvation. If the tree be made good, the fruit will be good also. If the fountain be cleansed, the streams will be pure. And if the sinner be converted, and have faith in Christ, the fruits will necessarily appear.

The grand agent in accomplishing this work in the hearts of

men, preparing them to glorify God, and enjoy him forever, is the Holy Spirit; which Christ promised to send into the world.

Our subject presents us with some of the evidences, or fruits, which flow from experimental godliness.

1. *Peace.* The calm, quiet, and serene state which follows justification by faith, and is generally the first fruit. 'Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ. Previous to this change, 'the mind is carnal, it is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.' This enmity to God shows itself in the transgression of his laws, resistance of his Spirit, hatred to his people, and opposition to his moral government. This enmity being removed, the soul sees the suitableness and fitness of the divine government, and exclaims, 'O how I love thy law!' With this spirit the soul submits itself to God, and feels that the *yoke of Christ is easy, and his burden light.*

In an unjustified state, while under a sense of the guilt of sin, we have nothing but fear and terror, and awful forebodings of future wrath. Conscience, enlightened by the Spirit of God, speaks out to the sinner, and makes cowards of the boldest. 'There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.' But the forgiveness of sins, brings peace to the troubled mind, *for great peace have they that love thy law.*

But such as have peace with God, and peace of conscience, will be disposed to live in peace with all men. Christ has no contentious and quarrelsome members in his spiritual family. If any think otherwise, they deceive themselves on this subject.

Look at that contentious family! The father against the son, and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother. Here, where all should be calm and peaceful, the stormy passions rage uncontrolled; and it resembles more the regions of darkness and despair, than a place of domestic enjoyment. But let the spirit of Christ be introduced into these hearts, in its refining influence, and all is changed. Anger, hatred, and malice are removed; and are followed by kind and benevolent feelings towards each other. The demon of discord is cast out and the angel of peace takes up his abode with them.

View for a few moments that neighborhood, where every thing is favorable for enjoyment and usefulness. But unhappily, hatred, variance, wrath and litigations abound; to the destruction of all that is desirable and praiseworthy. But the spirit of Christ will allay this animosity and strife; and make all feel interested for each other's happiness. It will inspire them with a disposition to restore peace where it is lost; and preserve it where it is enjoyed.

This spirit and practice *will* be seen, among all those who are really joined to Christ, and walk in him as they have received him.

We may add, that in proportion as this spirit gains influence among the nations of the world, it will dispose them to *adjust* and *settle* differences, without resorting to war and bloodshed. 'He shall speak peace unto the heathen; and his dominion shall be from sea even to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth.' Such is the fruit and effect of the Spirit of Christ: and all his subjects are of a peaceful disposition. 'Blessed are the peace-makers, for they shall be called the children of God.'

2. *Love.* This is an ardent desire in the soul, to please and honor God in all things. It is the *essence* and *soul* of all true religion, and the fulfilling of the law of God.

We love God, because he first loved us. Without this, if we understood all mysteries, and had all knowledge, and could speak all languages, we should be nothing.

But in this age of religious speculation, when many are found to put in their claims of love to God, and it is feared in many instances without authority from his written word, it is important to give some of the *evidences* of love, by which we may try ourselves and not be deceived. 1. Love to God will show itself, by an ardent desire to resemble him in his moral nature. *God is holy.* We are imperceptibly drawn to adopt the principles, imbibe the spirit, and imitate the examples of earthly friends whom we love. If we love God we shall desire to be *holy*, and in all things to be conformed to him.

In this state man was created in the beginning, but by transgression has fallen from it. But through Jesus Christ we have been redeemed, and called to holiness; and this only can fit us for the heavenly state. 'Be ye holy, for I am holy: and without holiness no man can see the Lord.' He, therefore, that loves God, will ardently desire to be saved from the *guilt* and *practice* of sin; and to be *wholly* freed from the defilement of sin. And God has taught us to pray for this; and has promised it to all who seek it by faith. *Deliver us from evil. And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly. Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

2. Such as love God will dwell on him in their thoughts with pleasure. If we have an earthly object we love in a high degree, our thoughts involuntarily fix on that object; and if at any time they are called off they *quickly* fly back to that object. If we truly love God, our thoughts and desires will continually centre in him. As the needle always tends to the pole, and is only at rest

while it points thither, so he that loves God dwells with great delight on this object of supreme affection. 3. This love will show itself by keeping all God's commandments. 'If ye love me, keep my commandments. He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father. If a man love me, he will keep my words.' There can be no *genuine* love to God, unless we study to *know*, and cheerfully do his will in all things, great and small. 4. But he who loves God, will love his neighbor also. 'Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another.' It is in this way we give proof, that we are the disciples of Christ. 'By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.' It will be seen in all our acts of kindness and friendship towards our fellow creatures, both to their bodies and souls.

But we are not only to love the pious and good, and those who love *us*; for if we do only this, What do we more than others? Sinners love those who are friendly to them. But we are to *love* and *forgive* our bitterest enemies. 'Bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you.' The Saviour showed this disposition while on the earth, and all his followers are inspired with a *degree* of the same spirit.

Christians should frequently examine themselves, and see what feelings they exercise towards those who oppose them, and persecute the church of Christ. Love worketh no ill towards our fellow creatures; but is compassionate, kind, and forgiving. And this is one of the fruits of the Spirit. May we show it in our life.

3. *Joy.* This arises from a sense of God's mercy communicated to the soul in the pardon of sin, and the prospect of eternal glory. This joy is in the Lord. The men of this world rejoice in their *wisdom*, *strength*, *riches*, *honors* and *friends*, but the true believer rejoices in none of these; for they are all unsatisfactory, fading and passing away. He rejoices in God, as the never-failing source of good to all his believing people. His nature, perfections, and government afford him ground for permanent joy.

The believer also rejoices in his *duty*. While multitudes are ashamed to *pray* and *speak* for God, though they are not ashamed to take his name in vain, and commit sins against him and their own souls, and even glory in doing it; the Christian rejoices in taking up his cross, denying himself of all sin, coming out from the world, and performing every Christian duty, in its proper time and place. He rejoices in the privilege of following his Saviour, in all the ordinances and duties enjoined in his gospel.

God's people rejoice in their *prospects*. 'They rejoice in hope

of the glory of God.' The impenitent would pass along tolerably well, were it not for fear of the future. The very idea of meeting God in death,—going into eternity, and standing before Him in judgment, harrows up their souls, and torments them from day to day. These awful forebodings and warnings of conscience, which all feel more or less, who have not the spirit of Christ, bearing witness with their spirit that they are accepted of God, make the condition of the sinner miserable indeed. But he who has the spirit of Christ dwelling in him enabling him to say, '*My Lord*, and *my God*,' rejoices in the prospect of these events. The believer is assured that to die in Christ is gain; that it will put an end to all the labors and sorrows of the present life; increase his bliss; perfect his knowledge in the ways of providence; join him to the triumphant church; and eternally fix him beyond the reach of *pain*, *sickness* and *death*. He anticipates a happy meeting with departed friends, who have gone to heaven, and that he shall not only see these, but Jesus Christ, his very best friend. He believes that Christ will own him as one of his friends, before his Father and the holy angels; and in the day of judgment say, 'Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.'

With these hopes and prospects, who would not rejoice at the idea of going from this to another world? And all this is the fruit of God's Spirit, in all those who are born of God, and are sealed with the *spirit* of *promise*.

4. *Long-suffering*. This is a patient and forbearing spirit, while suffering injuries and provocations from others, from the consideration that God has borne long with us. It is through God's long-suffering that *we* have not been consumed.

From the consideration of God's forbearance towards us, and its happy tendency, we should be induced to show a similar spirit towards enemies and persecutors.

The conduct and spirit of those who are under the influence of the carnal mind, is very different. They are impelled forward by the wicked spirit of retaliation and revenge. Not willing to rest their cause in the hands of a righteous God, they usurp the reins of government, and would fain punish *immediately* such as offend them.

Our Divine Saviour showed a very different spirit, under all the insults and provocations, which he experienced while here among the vilest of sinners. 'He was despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted; yet he opened not his mouth: he was brought as a lamb to

the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.'

This spirit is exemplified more or less in all those who have put on Christ, and are bearing the fruits of holiness. If called hard names, traduced in their characters, abused in their persons or injured in their prosperity, for Christ's sake; they remember that the servant is not greater than his Lord, and if they have done these things to Christ, his followers must expect the same. They, therefore, commit their cause into the hands of him, who will *avenge his own* elect—who will eventually justify them before the world, and cause shame and confusion to cover their enemies and persecutors. The long-suffering of God towards *them* excites the spirit of forbearance towards persecuting and blinded sinners. And as Christ has done so much for them, and they hope for so much at his hand, they count it an honor and privilege to be permitted to suffer *for* him; knowing that if they suffer *with* him, they shall also reign with him.

Long-suffering shows itself in a readiness to *forgive* injuries. Those who are unwilling to forgive their fellow beings, should not expect forgiveness from God. How can such offer that petition, 'Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us?' The most noble and generous minds are always most ready to forgive offences; and it is a mark of *meanness*, as well as *baseness* of mind, to harbor an unforgiving temper. A Christian is ready to forgive those who have done him the greatest injuries; for he has a measure of the same spirit, which led the Saviour to say, 'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.' Christians cannot too frequently examine themselves, and the feelings they indulge towards those who persecute and oppose them: for we should not only inquire how we do, but also how we *feel* towards others.

Long-suffering is manifested in bearing the sufferings of this life without murmuring or repining; and submitting cheerfully to every dispensation of God's holy providence. The state of the soul, and the Christian graces, may be tested by our conduct under afflictions. God has wisely designed to *try* and *prove* his followers, by the multiplied and varied trials of this life; and to convince Satan and all his servants, that his grace is sufficient for them at all times.

But when the heart is not right before God, we are inclined to complain, and repine under the discipline and wise government of an unerring Deity. We are disposed to consider all these things against us, when they are, in fact, wisely intended for our spiritual and everlasting good. It is often said, We could bear any affliction but this. But he who knows the heart, and from whom nothing can be concealed, knows where the distempered blood is; and there applies the lancet, however painful the operation.

This accounts for the sensitiveness which is shown, when our 'Isaacs' are taken or our idols removed. God sees we are often in danger where we *least* suspect it, and in mercy applies the seasonable remedy.

Afflictions are wisely intended to quicken our pace, and urge us onward to the heavenly goal, as well as to sever the ties that bind us to earth, and make us long for that better country. And such as have a single eye,—and faith in lively exercise, and the love of God burning upon their hearts, will rest assured, that these light afflictions are intended by their heavenly Father for their best good. Hence they will be enabled to say from the heart, 'The will of the Lord be done—What! shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?' And this resignation of soul to the providential dealings of God, is one of the fruits which flow from the Holy Spirit.

5. *Gentleness.* Softness, or mildness of disposition and behavior. It stands opposed to harshness and severity, violence and oppression. James iii. 17. Not rigid and unyielding in things of minor importance, where no moral principle is involved. It by no means yields to the opinions or practices of others, where *truth* and *virtue* are to be sacrificed. It gives up no just right from fear, but with a firm and Christian spirit contends for *truth* and *justice*.

It shows itself in affability and urbanity of manners; modesty of deportment, sweetness of temper, and amiableness of conduct in our intercourse with the world. The grace of God, and a suitable education, will subdue the corrupt and stormy passions of the human heart; refine the affections, and direct them to their proper objects; and fit men for the different relations in society, and for a brighter world.

And how important that Christians should cultivate this grace, in their intercourse with the world: and how much more useful would many of them be, if this grace were enjoyed and practised in a higher degree! Is it not a fact, that many, whom we have reason to believe have some *degree* of grace, are comparatively useless in the world, by reason of *rough*, *uncouth*, and *unkind* manners?

Christians should endeavor, therefore, to be courteous and civil; and never unnecessarily give pain or offence to any one; but convince all, that Christianity has improved their hearts and lives, fitted them for usefulness, and for the amiable society of heaven.

6. *Goodness.* This is the next fruit of the Spirit.

It is an ardent and perpetual desire, and sincere study, not only to abstain from *all* evil, but to do all possible good to the bodies and the souls of men. And this cannot spring from a heart unre-

newed by the Spirit and grace of God. Before the heart is renewed, we are selfish,—seek our *own*, and not our *neighbor's* good; the things of *earth*, and not the things which are *above*.

But when delivered from the carnal mind and its fruits, we are prepared for enlarged benevolence and extensive usefulness. We shall then feel for the poor and afflicted, and reach out the hand of charity, to those on whom the storms of life have beaten heavily; remembering that he who was rich became poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich. This will lead us to feel, that it is GOD who makes us to differ from *them*, and requires that we should be good stewards of what he has intrusted to our care; and that while we are administering to God's children, it will be reckoned as done to Christ. 'It is more blessed to give than to receive. Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto *me*.'

But this goodness will not only induce us to feel *for*, and *do* for the *bodies* of men, but much more for their souls; in as much as they are more valuable, and are to exist parallel with their Author. Hence those mighty efforts to *enlighten*, *reform*, and *save* the souls of men.

All the benevolent exertions which have ever been made purely to bring mankind to a saving knowledge of the truth, and fit them for a future world, may be ascribed to the influence of this spirit. And in proportion as goodness increases, these efforts will be multiplied around us, till the world shall be converted to Christ, and sin and wickedness no more abound.

Now, if this be a fruit of the Holy Spirit, dwelling in believers, and exciting them to benevolent exertions, should we not frequently examine ourselves, and prove ourselves, whether we be in the faith? What have we done to make our families Christians —holy in heart and life? What have we done for the conversion of our relatives, with whom we have influence? What have we done for those with whom we have intercourse in the business of life? Have we been instrumental of turning any one, or more, from darkness to light,—from sin to holiness? What are we doing for the conversion of the heathen, and to bring on the glorious day of the millennium? It is to be remembered, that he that watereth others, shall be refreshed in his own soul. 'Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.'

The light of our *doctrine*, *experience* and *practice*, are to show men that religion has made us better, and inspired us with love for their bodies and souls, and enabled us to make corresponding efforts to do them good.

7. *Faith.* This is sometimes put for the doctrine of the gospel. Acts xxiv. 24. 'It was needful for me to write unto you and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the *faith* which was once delivered unto the saints.' Jude 3. It includes all those important, fundamental truths, revealed in the bible, which are intimately connected with our salvation.

Faith, also, is more frequently taken for the grace of faith, by which we are justified from all sin, and have peace with God. It is that powerful, influential principle, by which the guilt of sin is removed, the soul united to Christ, and made fruitful, happy and holy: and which gives victory over death and hell. 'By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God. This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.'

But *faith* is here used for *fidelity*; punctuality in performing promises. 1. Promises made to God and his church. When believers become members of the church of Christ, they enter into a covenant relation with their Maker; God on his part engages to *supply, defend*, and *bless* his humble followers, and never to leave nor forsake them. They promise on their part to forsake all sin, and live a spiritual and holy life; presenting their bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God; to praise and honor him, and to promote his glory in the world.

And have we been faithful to these covenant engagements? Has our eye been single? Has faith been kept in lively exercise? Have we love to God and men? Have we done all things with a view to God's glory? Have we done all in our power to reform the vicious, instruct the ignorant, and promote holiness and happiness among our fellow men? These are questions which we ought to be enabled to answer in the affirmative. But in many instances we are compelled to acknowledge, that we have come very far short of our duty.

2. Promises made to our fellow-creatures. Is there not a fault among many professing Christians in this respect? Who *rigidly* adheres to his word, and *strictly* keeps his promise, in all business transactions? In how many instances great evils follow a remissness in this particular; to say nothing of the moral evil! As an instance of this nature, one man promises a sum of money to another, which is his just due, at a given time; the latter on the strength of this, promises to a third; and so on, perhaps in five or ten cases. The time at length arrives; but the first named person pays no attention to his promise. Who does not perceive a train of consequences, which may *seriously* injure some, or all of them in their business?

But is it said by the first individual, that the person to whom he

promised, does not need the money, and he can well be excused? But will *he* take it upon him to say, that he understands all his neighbor's engagements? And is another's prosperous condition to be an apology for him to tell his? This is a very erroneous way of reasoning.

But if it be said in the above case, that events transpired over which the promiser could have no control, and which entirely precluded the possibility of performing his promise; then the *least* that can be done, and which should *immediately* be done, is frankly to inform the creditor of the true state of the case. He who neglects *this*, is highly censurable.

But is it said the sum is very small, and cannot be of great importance? Is it of no importance to speak the *truth* in small matters? He who can bring his mind to this reasoning and feel no lashes of conscience, is preparing himself for the commission of still greater sins. We should, therefore, rigidly keep all our promises, whether they relate to things of *more*, or *less* importance, —to God, or our fellow-men.

We ought to say in all our engagements, '*The Lord will*' we will do thus and so. But it should be *distinctly* understood, that he who promises without a *reasonable* prospect of being able to perform, is guilty of a moral wrong.

Again, it implies *faithfulness* in transacting all business committed to our care. Here we are to be governed by that law, which requires us to love others as we do ourselves; and then we shall *do* for *them*, as we should wish *them* to do for *us*, in a change of circumstances.

But how great the danger of yielding to selfishness, instead of acting on the broad principle of love to all!

How many widows and orphans have been defrauded, by unfaithful and dishonest executors! What an amount of suffering has been experienced; what rivers of tears have been shed by bereaved widows, and fatherless children on this account! And what an awful amount will all such unfaithful men have to give, in the great and last day, when standing before the infinite and impartial Judge of all men! I wonder this subject does not fill the minds of those with horror, who have gained perhaps a great portion of their wealth, by injustice in their deal. Let all such remember, that they have not the spirit of Christ, and *are not* followers of Christ. Let all then bring themselves to *this* criterion, and learn whether they are bringing forth the fruits of the Spirit. Let none while endeavoring to gain treasures on earth, sacrifice the inheritance of heaven. This would be an infinite loss to sustain.

And let the trust reposed in us never be betrayed, nor the

confidence of our employers disappointed, to the injury of religion, and the loss of our own peace.

8. *Meekness.* This is *gentleness*, *mildness*, *softness* of temper; 'and even balance of all tempers and passions; the entire opposite to *anger*.' In our fallen and unrenewed state, we are under the influence of corrupt and stormy passions, which nothing can control, aside from *Divine influence*. The restraints of education, and the best human laws have been employed in vain for this purpose: though they may have succeeded in some instances for a time, yet the fettered but unsubdued passions have eventually broken over these barriers; and, like the overflowing of a mighty torrent, bid defiance to human obstructions.

But the Spirit and grace of God are sufficient to subdue and regulate the passions of the heart, and make men *mild*, *gentle* and *amiable*.

Is it said, that 'some are naturally passionate,—given to anger,—that this is their infirmity, and they cannot expect to be freed from it in this life?' Let it be remembered, that the sin which doth so *easily* beset us,' is to be laid aside, and God does not require impossibilities, but is reasonable in all his demands, and his grace will be sufficient for the performance of all duties. He is faithful to his promises, and will not only *forgive* our sins, but *purify* our evil nature, *even from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit*. When this work is wrought in the soul by the power of Divine grace, the mild and heavenly spirit of *meekness* follows. Nor should we be satisfied till this victory is gained, and this work accomplished.

'Humble, and teachable, and mild,
O may I, as a little child,
My lowly Master's steps pursue!
Be anger to my soul unknown;
Hate, envy, jealousy, be gone;
In love create thou all things new.'

9. *Temperance. Self-government* or *moderation:* a total abstinence from things sinful, and a moderate use of things lawful. It has respect to *eating*, *drinking*, *sleeping*, *laboring*, &c. It is opposed to gluttony and drunkenness, from which we are in the greatest danger.

When we consider the strong inclination in the unrenewed heart to indulge in excesses; and the fatal influence it has on the constitution, as well as on the peace and salvation of the soul, we are not surprised at the efforts which are made to promote temperance. On the contrary, when we reflect on the alarming extent to which *intemperance in drinking* has spread in our country we are rather surprised, that the public mind slept so long, before it was aroused to combat with this powerful and deadly enemy.

But the time has arrived when a mighty impetus is felt through the nation, and the prospects of temperance efforts are brightening on every hand. And to this work the writer says, Amen. May it continue to increase, till there shall not be a *rum-drinking*, nor a *rum-selling* Christian on the habitable globe.

The great Author of our being has taught us, that our bodies are to be temples for the Holy Spirit, and that we are to be temperate in *all* things. 'Teaching us, that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly, in this present world: Be ye therefore *sober*, and watch unto prayer.'

Temperance, therefore, will lead us to abstain from every thing which would injure health, pollute the soul, and offend God. It does not prohibit the *use*, but the *abuse* of that which is lawful.

In reviewing this subject, we learn,

1. That the Holy Spirit is the *efficient* agent in the awakening conversion, and salvation of sinners; that, without this influence, sinners would remain *careless*, *impenitent*, and strangers to peace. And this Spirit is given to *all;* and where it is not *quenched*, *grieved*, and *resisted*, it renews and sanctifies the soul.

2. That where this work is wrought, and the Spirit *abides* in us, the fruits *must* follow and be seen in the life. These fruits are brought to view in the text, the subject of our consideration.

3. We have a criterion by which we may test and prove our religious experience, and learn whether we are under the influence of the spirit of Christ. 'If any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his.' 'Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; SO SHALL YE BE MY DISCIPLES.' Amen.

SERMON XXII.

FUNERAL SERMON.

Delivered at City Road Chapel, on Friday Morning, January 18, 1833.
Occasioned by the Death of the Rev. Richard Watson.

BY REV. JABEZ BUNTING, A. M.

"Verily verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death.' JOHN, viii. 51.

It is one of the highest excellencies of the Christian revelation, that it 'brings life and immortality to light.' It is the peculiar glory of Jesus himself, the great Apostle and High Priest of our profession, that while on the one hand he finishes transgression, makes reconciliation for iniquity, and bringeth in an everlasting righteousness,—on the other hand also he abolishes death and destroys him that had the power of death—that is, the devil—and thus delivers us who otherwise must have remained, through fear of it, always subject to bondage. This joyous truth, so often asserted by the Apostle of our Lord, is here emphatically announced by himself: 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death.'

By the 'saying' of Christ, we are to understand the whole system of truth which Christ directly or indirectly hath taught. The expression, therefore, includes, in the first place, *all those doctrines and precepts which were taught by Christ himself during his residence on earth;* for 'God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in times past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son.' Among other offices which our Saviour assumed—among other functions he represented himself as performing, one was that of a Prophet, a public teacher of religion, divinely commissioned and inspired. He proclaimed himself, you know, to be the Apostle or ambassador of Jehovah—

the messenger of the covenant of peace. He declared that the Spirit of the Lord was upon him, anointing him to preach the Gospel to the poor. And accordingly we find, that the four Evangelists, who are his historians, have given us an account, not merely of his personal transactions and travels, but of his public discourses; and it is impossible to read those summaries of his most important discourses—those details of his most striking and useful sayings with which we are thus furnished, without wondering, like some of old, at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth, and exclaiming, 'Never man spake like this man!'

It is of importance to remind you that this phrase—the 'saying' of Christ, must be understood as comprehending all those doctrines and precepts which our Saviour more privately taught to his apostles, or with which they became acquainted after his departure, in consequence of the plenary effusion of the Holy Spirit, and which were thus, in his name and by his appointment, officially communicated to mankind, and left on record for the church in succeeding ages. The word, which first began to be spoken by the Lord himself, was confirmed in them that heard it, and not merely confirmed, but further illustrated, more eminently developed and unfolded. It was necessary to the full accomplishment of some great purposes of our Saviour's incarnation, that he should maintain a prudential reserve in the course of his own ministry, on certain points of religious doctrine. For instance, if explicitly and at once he had avowed, wherever he went, his own divine character and supreme dignity, accompanying that avowal with unequivocal and overwhelming displays of his power and glory,—it is hard to conceive how those prophecies could ever have received their fulfilment, which describe the Messiah as 'a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief,' and foretold his sufferings and his death. His atoning sacrifice—that important part of his ministerial task and purpose—humanly speaking, must have been prevented by the premature disclosure of his heavenly rank, or by a too luminous and overwhelming display of his Divine perfections.

He did not, therefore, to use his own expression, 'put new wine into old bottles;' he did not impart the full blaze of that light, which he intended ultimately to introduce, in a sudden but in a gradual manner. The darkness began to be dispelled by the preaching of John the Baptist: that was the twilight which preceded the dawn of the evangelical dispensation. By the personal appearance and ministry of our Saviour, a still greater degree of light was introduced, and continued to increase and to become brighter and brighter till it came to the perfect day, in consequence of the Pentecostal effusion of the Holy Spirit on the assembled apostles. Then they were led into all truth, and fully qualified for the office

which they were to sustain, as master builders in the Christian church. Then they were made acquainted with every thing it was requisite they should, as Christian ministers, experimentally practise, and which, as apostles, they should establish and enjoin. To this end, perhaps, our Saviour in no small degree contributed, by his own instructions, especially during that season of confidential intercourse which they were permitted to enjoy with him, between the time of his resurrection and ascension. He was with them forty days, and spoke to them of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God ; and being assembled with them, and almost entirely confining his attention to this one object—then it was he gave to them this great command, to 'go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature;' or, 'Go, disciple all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.'

Now, when we look at this commission, when we view it in connexion with the Pentecostal effusion of the Holy Spirit already adverted to, can we, for a moment, on any rational ground, hesitate to admit that *the inspired sayings of the apostles* are, in point of obligation, the sayings of Christ himself, and are entitled to our implicit and obedient veneration ? The Acts of the Apostles and the apostolic epistles contain the record of these sayings. It may be said—I know it has been said by those who wish to supersede apostolical authority in the church, under pretence of exalting the Divine Prophet himself—that Paul was not present at one of these assemblies, and that he did not partake of the effusion of the day of Pentecost. This is true; but the loss of them was abundantly supplied. He was amply qualified for all apostolical functions by the extraordinary revelations which he was favored with, and of which he gave miraculous proof to the church. 'The signs of an apostle' were in him and with him ; he, therefore, like the rest of the apostles, was authorised to say, 'He that despiseth us despiseth not men but God, who hath also given unto us his Holy Spirit.' 'We,' we apostles, 'have the mind of Christ,' and have it for the purpose of making it known : 'the things we write unto you are the commandments of the Lord.'

Then, may I not observe, that *the whole canon of Scripture may be considered as the saying of Christ ?* for, as to the books of the Jewish Scriptures, we know that they were written under the teaching and influence of the Holy Spirit, which is the Spirit of Jesus. 'All Scripture is given by inspiration of God:' these holy men spake and wrote as they were moved by the Holy Ghost ; and this being the case, all the doctrines of Divine revelation at large, even those of the Old Testament, are to be considered as

the sayings of Christ; and as to every moral precept presented in the Jewish Scriptures, if there can be no proof adduced of their repeal or abolition in the New Testament, directly or virtually, surely even those precepts also must be allowed to come under this description. In the large sense, therefore, the sayings of Christ comprised the whole system of religious truth which Christ has directly or indirectly taught to men.

Now, what is it to keep these sayings? It implies such things as the following: *a knowledge and belief of the Divine truth in the understanding*. A man cannot keep what he does not know: neither the laws nor the precepts of Christ can be expected to produce any beneficial effect on the heart or the life, unless the judgment has previously discerned their nature and import, and been convinced of their obligation. Whoever, therefore, will keep the sayings of Christ, must begin with a careful investigation of those sacred oracles which contain 'the mind of God'—he must apply himself to the holy Scriptures with conscientious diligence, that he may find it 'profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness.' He must avail himself of every help which the providence of God may have placed within his reach, whether public or private, for arriving at a correct understanding of the meaning of these holy oracles; and above all, he must implore, in earnest prayer, the illumination of the Spirit. 'Consider,' said Paul, on one occasion, 'what I say, and the Lord give thee understanding in all things;' teaching us, that divine illumination, as well as human study and diligence, is necessary to the right apprehension of the sacred truth and of Divine things in general. The understanding must be so opened by the Spirit himself, as to understand the Scriptures; it must be purged from the operation of those worldly prejudices and carnal feelings, which will prevent the truth from making its due impression on the mind; and thus, in God's light we shall see light.

I think, that keeping the saying of Christ also implies, a *careful retention of it in the memory*. This is fully unfolded in the Scriptures as a duty to which we should pay attention, and in which we should exercise ourselves. 'Take the more earnest heed to the things which ye have heard.' 'Ye are saved, if ye keep in memory the things which I have preached unto you.' Look at Peter's second epistle, and see how, in the second and third chapters, he lays exceeding great stress upon the importance of his writing that epistle, for the sake of assisting the churches into whose hands it should come, to 'remember the things they had been taught and heard.'

Now, how is this to be chiefly accomplished? Chiefly, I think, by two means;—first, by the continued use of those means of

prayerful study of the Scriptures, to which we are indebted for all our present information; by an habitual recurrence to those fountains of light from which all the streams of illumination and information flow; by a constantly persevering use of the word of God and prayer; and secondly, by abounding in the duty of holy meditation. When the shepherds made known abroad the sayings of the angels, concerning the holy child Jesus, we are told, 'Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart.' The way to keep Divine things is to ponder them much in our hearts—to familiarize them to our minds, to imprint them on our memories by a sedulous and determined direction of our thoughts and attentions to these subjects.

To keep the saying of Christ, implies *the love of truth in the heart and affections.* No knowledge of Christian doctrine, however comprehensive—no retention of Scripture truth, however prefect and exact, will be of any practical utility unless they produce an impression on the heart—unless the heart be interested and filled with a sense of the strongest attachment to them. If we will believe, it must be 'with the heart unto righteousness'—if we will so receive the truth as to be saved by it, it must be 'in the love of the truth.' The good seed of the word is said to be sown on good ground, and is likely to bring forth good fruit, when it is sown in a good and honest heart, made so by the renewing influence of the Holy Spirit. Our Saviour, therefore, had good reason for saying 'He that loveth me not, keepeth not my saying; for no man will keep Christ's sayings who does not love him; and no man will love Christ's sayings but he in whom the love of Christ has been shed abroad by the Holy Ghost given to him. Hence it appears, that none but pardoned persons, who love the Saviour who first loved them—none but regenerate persons, in whom the carnal mind, which is enmity against God, has been superseded by the spiritual mind, which affects Divine and spiritual things, bringing life and peace,—none but such persons can keep the sayings of Christ, in the sense to which the promise in the text is annexed.

Those sayings of Christ must first of all be studied—must first of all be received and obeyed, which require repentance towards God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. While we habitually treat with contempt or neglect these sayings, we cannot be qualified for keeping any part of the Divine injunctions with uniformity and honesty and cheerfulness; but when, coming to God in the way he himself has appointed, you obtain pardoning mercy and the Spirit of adoption and grace, then love to your pardoning God will make your feet in swift obedience move—then you will find it perfect liberty to serve the God you love.

I hardly need dwell on another observation—that to keep the

saying of Christ implies *a practical attention to the requirements of truth.* Of course you will all admit, without the necessity of argument, that to keep Christ's saying is to keep it as our rule by which we are to be governed—to keep it as our way in which we are to walk in our progress to our heavenly Father's kingdom. We are to keep Christ's sayings by acknowledging and adopting them as our rule of life and as our maxims of conduct.

And lastly, I add, that to keep the saying of Christ, implies *a steadfast adherence to the cause of truth, and the profession of it according to our means and opportunities, to the end of our earthly pilgrimage.* To keep Christ's saying, is opposed to the desertion or abandonment of it. Accordingly, we are required to 'abide in Christ's word'—to continue in the faith rooted and grounded—to 'hold fast the form of sound words.' Thus only, when we come to die, shall we be able to say, to the honor of Divine grace, 'I have kept the faith.' Thus only shall we receive from the hand of our Judge that sentence of approbation—'Thou hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name.'

I pass on now to notice THE PRIVILEGE WHICH IS ATTACHED TO THIS CHARACTER. 'If a man keep my saying'—if his heart and life be brought and kept by the grace of God in Christ under the governing and sanctifying influence of Divine and Christian truth, 'he shall never see death.' Of course we are all too well aware, even were it only from recent visitations of Providence, that this promise must not be understood as entitling believers to expect an exemption from natural death. It is not in that sense that the Saviour tells his followers they 'shall never see death.' 'It is appointed unto all men'—to holy men as well as to wicked men, to those that keep as well as those that reject or abandon the sayings of Christ—'it is appointed to all men once to die.' Enoch and Elijah have, indeed, already been exempted from the operation of this decree: the exception will be extended hereafter, we are told, to those who shall be alive at the second coming of Christ. The trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised, but surviving saints shall be changed. With these few and almost singular exceptions, there is no discharge from that warfare which we are called to wage with the last enemy—death.

Doubtless God could have as easily extended the benefit—if it is really a benefit—of translation to all his faithful people as he did to the eminent saints we have mentioned. He could have caused them to be translated to their eternal rest and recompense without, in any sense, tasting death; but there seem to be good reasons, apparent even to us—and doubtless there are many we know not at present which we may know hereafter—why a contrary determination has taken place in the Divine councils. If God had adopted the plan

of universal translation in favor of his people, and had exempted them from death, it must have been by a continual system of counteraction to the present tendencies of nature—that is, it would have required a perpetuity of miracles ; and it is not in the plan or order of God to display anything like a waste—a superfluous and unnecessary exhibition of miraculous power; because, first dying, and then entering into glory in consequence of the resurrection of the body to eternal life, the people of Christ are more exactly and gloriously conformed to him who is their Saviour and their ever living head : and this, to those who love Christ aright, and who have those feelings of affectionate regard to every thing which appertains to him which they ought to have, will not be deemed of mean importance. In consequence of the plan actually adopted, in preference to that to which we are adverting, and which might, possibly, have been adopted,—a constant memorial is maintained, in the sight of all the world, of the terrible evil of sin ; the just and legal desert of it is thus exhibited, in a very impressive and awful manner, before our eyes ; the important truth is brought home sooner or later to every individual ; and at the same time brought into and exhibited in every family and every circle and community of men—that the proper wages of sin is the death of the body as well as the destruction of the soul. If it had been the plan of God, that all the saints should be translated and that sinners only should die, the consequence would have been, that the promised resurrection would have lost all that is agreeable and pleasant ; it would have been connected only with anticipations dark, gloomy, and terrible : the seccond advent of our Saviour himself in that case would have lost half its splendor. And then, again, upon the plan of the translation of the righteous, so that the wicked only should be left to die, this would have been the result—that the last judgment would, in a great measure, have been anticipated and rendered useless : we should have known, from the very manner of a man's departure from this world, whether in the way of translation or death, what was the judgment of God on his character, or what would have been his final condition ; and thus all the moral influence connected with that great day would have been lost, and many great calamities inflicted upon the feelings of survivors.

These are some of the reasons which divines have usually urged, as vindicating this part of the ways of God toward his pardoned and beloved people. On the whole, it seems to us to be meet and right and fitting, that the righteous should be buried, and that the people of God should pass through death to their eternal home.

As this clause in the verse does not promise at all exemption from natural death, so neither does it promise continued existence merely to good men in a future state of being, in opposition to the

extinction of being, or its annihilation. For not to see death, in this sense—that is, not to be annihilated—not to pass from life into nonentity—is by no means peculiar to such as keep the sayings of Christ: continued existence is the portion and will be the curse of the ungodly: they shall seek death but shall not find it; they shall desire to die, and to be as if they had never been: death shall flee away from them: their being will be their torment. God in his infinite mercy save us from so great a death—the death that never dies!

What, then, appears to be the true meaning of this promise? It seems to me, first, that Jesus here engages to afford his faithful people such dying consolation and assistance, as that they shall not see death in its natural and original horrors—they shall have no painful experience of it in its hostile and vengeful character. Death, considered abstractedly—viewed only in its origin, in its more obvious and direct results and its usual circumstances, cannot possibly be contemplated by any enlightened mind but with feelings of solemnity—never by any enlightened mind with feelings other than those of seriousness, if viewed apart from the promises of the Gospel and the blessings of the new covenant. Death has all the aspect of an enemy, viewed only by the eye of sense: it effects often a very painful separation between soul and body, and dissolves the intimacy which has subsisted between them; it turns our strength into weakness, our beauty into loathsomeness, our activity into impotence and indolence. 'When thou with rebukes dost correct man for iniquity, thou makest his beauty to consume away like a moth'—as a moth consumes a garment; and it appears but too striking and plain, that 'every man at his best estate is altogether vanity:' it clogs up our senses, cuts asunder every social and domestic tie: it consigns our bodies to the worms in the grave, and sends our souls to appear in the presence of our Almighty Judge. And death is still more terrible and hostile in the aspect which it bears upon the awakened conscience of the unsaved sinner: to him who has any thing like right views, death must appear as the appointed executioner of the Divine vengeance on the transgressor of the law. Death comes, as it were, on such a one and takes him by the throat, and says, 'Pay me what thou owest!' Hence we find death compared in Scripture to a serpent possessing a fatal sting. We are told, that that sting is sin—unpardoned and unsubdued sin—and that 'the strength of sin is the law.' It is our just exposure, as transgressors, to the vengeance of the Divine law, that arms death with his sting and gives him all his power over us.

Thus terrible, thus hostile is death, if viewed by the eye of sense, and if viewed, too, by the eye of an awakened sinner who

has, as yet, no interest in the Saviour—who has not been delivered practically and personally from the curse of the law, by fleeing to Him who is 'the end of the law for righteousness.' No wonder that such men are afraid to die. But mark how different is the case with respect to the man who has received and kept the sayings of Christ! He has obtained, through faith in the atoning sacrifice of Christ, the pardon of his transgressions: he is no longer a condemned sinner, except as he condemns himself, and is—

'Willing to grieve his life away,
For having grieved his Lord.'

'There is no condemnation to him who is in Christ Jesus.' In his case the curse is, by the abounding grace of the Gospel, converted into a blessing. Christ hath so far abolished death, in the case of all his pardoned and saved people, that it seems to me they are no longer strictly and properly under its merely legal power. They are, indeed, doomed to die; but it is in virtue of that wise and gracious constitution of their pardoning God and reconciled Father, who has determined, that the way of death is, on the whole, the best and properest and most beneficial way for them; though to other men it is pure unmitigated penalty to die out of Christ, yet to those who die in Christ, it not pure unmitigated penalty. It is a penalty in its original circumstances, painful and afflicting in this and some of its more obvious results; but, nevertheless, by grace it is converted into a blessing; it is one of the 'all things' that is said to 'work together for good;' it is put into the inventory of the Christian's privileges—'Life is yours, and *death* is yours'—a part of God's plan for your highest and eternal advantage. When men are interested, then, in this great privilege, they do not see death as other men see it—they do not see death in its natural terrors. The aspect of the last enemy is to them greatly changed; they often smile—such is the overflowing grace of God in them—rather than frown: he comes not as a messenger of wrath, but as the messenger of release and deliverance; he comes to be the instrument of rescue to them from all grief and temptation, and brings them the peace and purity which shall admit them at once into everlasting joy. And how often, then, have we seen this; so that the dying Christian—before, perhaps, accustomed to look at the period of dying as exceedingly formidable, and ready to shrink from the circumstances which accompany it—has said with sweet surprise,

'Tell me, my soul, can this be death'

Thus the believer has enjoyed, in innumerable instances, the

triumph which his Saviour has achieved; enlightened by the Gospel of Christ, which brings life and immortality to light—interested in the atoning sacrifice of Christ—shielded and cheered and sustained by the indwelling Spirit of Christ, he triumphs over his foe, and says, 'O death, where is thy sting? O grave where is thy victory?' This is dying, certainly in a very solemn sense of the expression too; but this is not that dying to which man subjected himself by transgression—it is not that unmitigated curse of death which was the proper penalty of the original offence.

Then, I will just say, that probably the expression of the text includes another idea. It includes not only the promise of a safe and tranquil dissolution, but also *the promise of a joyful resurrection.* 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall not see death for ever'—so some render the term. Christ, in the case of all his people, hath already abolished death: so far, as we have said, it is no longer to them a pure unmitigated penalty. Even the right of death to have dominion over their bodies, is a right derived not merely from the law, nor is it dependent upon the law which originally adjudged that penalty as the wages of sin, —it is derived especially from the gracious appointment of God. Death does not reign over them in the same manner in which he reigns over those who have the whole curse of the law upon them, and who never have obtained pardon and peace. Now then, even as respects the bodies of the saints, which are in this sense left free from the operation of death, that power is limited to the sinner—it is not lost for ever. Jesus is 'the resurrection and the life;' he hath 'the keys of hades and of death.' He shall, by and by, unlock the prison of the tomb, and set at liberty all them who love him and wait for his appearance. 'He shall change their vile bodies, that they may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the mighty working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.'

I have hastened through this very imperfect discussion of the subject, in order that I might have as much time as possible for that portion of the service allotted to me, which I am persuaded will be most interesting to you, and to which I trust God will deign to annex his blessing. I hope you are already satisfied that the text which I have ventured to select for this occasion, is not by any means unappropriate. I think, as I proceeded you must have been reminded, by several remarks which you heard, of the character, and what you knew generally to have been the dying consolation and experience of my late lamented friend and your ever to-be-lamented pastor. I could think, indeed, of no text of Scripture which seemed more suitable to describe his permanent excellencies, and the source and origin of those excellencies, and to

record the grateful sense we ought all to feel of the goodness of our God and Saviour to him in his latest hour.

Mr. Watson was distinguished by his profound and extensive acquaintance with Christian truth—the result of a real, persevering, serious, and careful study of the mind of God as revealed in the Scriptures. He studied not merely the critical import of Christ's sayings—not merely the words and etymologies, but the doctrines contained in them: and those doctrines not as separated and insulated, but as parts of a great and magnificent whole, which he surveyed in their connexion and order, their mutual bearings and relations, their harmony and collective glory. This practice accorded with his naturally great and active faculty for generalization—a faculty which habit had strengthened and rendered very delightful to him in its exercise. In all his private studies he had more pleasure in synthesis than in analysis, and was glad to make his escape from all details on all subjects to great principles. In some instances, perhaps, this taste for a philosophical classification of the results of his inquiries, led him to hasten prematurely to his conclusions; but when, as in the case of his scriptural studies, the materials of perfect information were fully and at once before him, he seldom fell into this error, or, if he did inadvertently commit it, soon discovered and repaired his temporary mistake.

His sense of the importance of the sayings of Christ was evinced —as I am informed by one who for two years had the privilege of lodging in his house—in his interesting manner of reading the Scriptures in his domestic devotions. So absorbed would he frequently seem to be in contemplation and mental inquiry—so alive to the value of every syllable, of every sentence, and so anxious to retain the impression, that he would pause many times in the course of reading, sometimes, as if unconscious of the presence of his family, and occasionally comment on any thing that struck him. He certainly had an insatiable appetite for truth—I should say, a passion for truth; in other respects he was not a man of emotion; but he had a passion for truth, and fed on it as the bread of life; or, to change the metaphor, he fed on the sayings of Christ 'as one who findeth great spoil.' A close study of Christian truth produced, under the influence of the Holy Spirit—as was to be expected in a mind honest and sincere as his—a firm and steadfast faith as to its Divine origin and its infinite interest and obligation. His attachment to all the fundamental verities of the Gospel became firm and exemplary, and grew in strength and influence to the very close of life. His reception of those verities was very little founded on metaphysical reasonings or on analogical congruities, real or imaginary; but primarily, in all cases, and almost exclusively too, on the Divine authority which has made them known. In Ethics he

had adopted and was wont to rest on the theory which takes the will of God as the ground of moral obligation; by that, I presume, he meant, as to us, God's creatures and subjects—while in Theology he contentedly reposed on the word of God and the sayings of Christ, as the all-sufficient and satisfactory foundation and only certain and clear and obligatory rule of Christian faith. 'Thus saith the Lord,' and 'Verily, verily, I say unto you'—these announcements were, with him, the end of controversy and of all strife, and cleared away at once all doubt and difficulty as to the fact so attested, or the truth revealed. After quoting in one of his pamphlets an objection to what he deemed an important truth respecting the Divine essence, and expressing his conviction of the metaphysical soundness of his argument—he eloquently exclaims—'But a truce to these reasonings: I willingly give them all up for a single word of the testimony of God. I affect them not; they seem to bring me irreverently too near to God: I would not break through and gaze. While I write I feel how just, and yet how reproving, are the words of the poet of paradise:

> "Dark with excessive light thy skirts appear,
> Yet dazzle heaven, that brightest seraphim
> Approach not, but with both wings veil their eyes."'

In this passage you have a fine specimen of the spirit of Mr. Watson as a theologian.

His views of the evidences of the Christian religion, in the first part of his Theological Institutes, is comprehensive; and that portion of it which treats of the proof arising from miracles, appears to me particularly discriminating. On the province of Reason, in the investigation of religious truth, his views are developed, in his remarks on the sonship of Christ, in a most masterly style, and in an admirable spirit of fair and candid inquiry. More of just, and even original, thinking seems to me to be there embodied, than can any where else be found on the subject in the same number of pages.

Among other proofs of his knowledge of the sayings of Christ and his conviction of the worth of truth, may be mentioned, that amidst all his other cares, he had made considerable preparation, for writing original notes on the New Testament, chiefly of a doctrinal and practical character. It will be matter of deep regret, that this labor is but very partially accomplished. In the last private conversation which I had with him, he expressed, with much feeling, his earnest wish, if it should please God, to live long enough to accomplish the two epistles to the Romans and the Hebrews, which books he thought would afford him an opportunity of which, from the most pure and conscientious motives, he seemed desirous,

to leave on record his views of those points of Christian Theology to which they refer, and which he deemed of vital importance to the salvation of men.

It can hardly be necessary to state here, that as the deliberate result of Mr. Watson's long application to theological studies, he ranked himself unhesitatingly among Trinitarians of the most strict and decided principles, and was an evangelical Arminian—that is, an Arminian of the school of Arminius himself and Mr. Wesley, rather than of the school in which some of the professed disciples of those great men have been disposed to take up their position.

My departed friend not only acquired great and valuable knowledge, but excelled in the faculty of retaining it. He continued his theological and Scriptural studies almost to the close of life. His attainments were always progressive, and his profiting appeared to all men: this was promoted by his habits of private thinking and meditation. He had always some subject of interesting investigation going on in his mind, to which he at every interval of leisure directed his thoughts; and street meditation, even in his walks through this busy metropolis, was an art he had successively cultivated. He almost invariably turned to like account his conversation with friends, when private meditation was interrupted. This elucidated the views of others, and made his own more fixed and clear to himself, by reciting his former thinkings on the subject introduced.

But what avails superior light without superior love? It is of infinite importance to remind you, in further illustration of the text, as applicable to Mr. Watson, that he received the truth in the love of it. The details of his early conversion I have not been able to obtain; but there is no doubt of the interesting fact: he repeatedly referred to it on his dying bed. Thus the Gospel was made unto him, 'the power of God unto salvation:' and the love of Christ himself, as well as Christ's sayings, became the master principle which governed his heart and life. Of the details of his religious experience, even in later life, I am as unfurnished with the materials as of those of his conversion. He was constitutionally and habitually reserved on these points of his personal history and feelings, until towards the time of his final sickness, when he became, even on these particulars, exceedingly frank, and evinced to those about him the simplicity of a child. But the genuine proofs of righteousness were very visible to those who knew him best, and could but command their esteem and love, notwithstanding any occasional infirmity of temper or manifestation of frailty which they might discover. Ever since I knew him I had reason to observe, that his piety, like his knowledge, was progressive; and

latterly its increasing vigor and maturity have been exceedingly striking and edifying.

As a Christian, he was decidedly a man of truly spiritual mind. He lived under a strong impression of eternal realities, and was elevated far above the sphere of mere earthly and grovelling delights. His thoughts were much in heaven; he had acquired very exalted views of the happiness into which the righteous enter, immediately on their being delivered from the burden of the flesh. He highly esteemed the recompense as well as the repose of their final state; and, under these impressions, kept an habitual watch on his affections, laboring, whether present or absent, to be accepted of his Master. He was a man of devotional habits: he possessed an equal combination of the gift and the spirit of prayer; and this he evinced in the great congregation as well as within the social circle, and at his own family exercise. He was exceedingly concerned about the use of time, and in endeavoring to turn life to good account—'to work while it is day, because the night cometh when no man can work.' It was his resolution and uniform conduct, under this sense of responsibility, in redeeming the time and adhering tenaciously to his own plans of employing it, that sometimes made him appear austere, and somewhat uncourteous, to those who would, for frivolous objects, have intruded on his leisure; and, perhaps, while he very properly denied himself to mere idlers, he did not always, in this and a few other respects, feel so strongly as might have been wished, what is due to the sensibilities and claims of tried and faithful friendship. These, however, were but spots in the sun, and were of rare and transient occurrence: they were often occasioned, probably by the pressure of physical suffering and disease.

He was greatly and deservedly loved by his friends, in his general intercourse with whom he connected, with admirable dignity of demeanor, the most winning condescension of character and conduct, and frequently manifested a generosity and benignity and disinterestedness altogether delightful. He assumed no haughty airs; he was too great to be vain; and his opinions were rarely enforced by any dogmatism, or any disdainful unwillingness to give a candid consideration to the views of those who differed from him.

It only remains to notice the steadfastness of our lamented friend in the profession of the truth, as illustrating the character of the man who keeps the sayings of Christ. While engaged in the mere process of inquiry, or in working out—as he used to term it—a subject of theological interest by discussion of its bearings and difficulties, he might, to some who knew not his habits, present the appearance of habitual unsteadiness. I know, however, no period, even in his early years of youthful ardor, in which he really

relinquished any great truth. Certain it is, that no difference in doctrine from us induced his union for a few years with the New Connexion: for that now respectable body never adopted any doctrine or standard hostile to our own. Constant study, increasing piety, a growing sobriety of judgment, rooted, grounded, and settled him on all points of doctrine. He was not one of those who are 'ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.' Having bought the truth, he would not sell it. He adopted Christ's sayings in his own creed; and loved the creeds and confessions of the ancient fathers, because he thought them signally instrumental in the defence of 'the faith once delivered to the saints.' He kept the sayings of Christ pure in his public ministry, and he kept them pure and undefiled in his writings, in which, though dead, he still speaketh.

As my honored friend exemplified the character mentioned in the text, so—blessed be God!—he realized the privileges which are promised to the faithful; and I shall now with thankfulness call your attention to his dying testimony. I shall lay before you some most interesting details, but allow me first to make a few general observations on this part of the case. In the time of health and strength, death was not a subject of agreeable contemplation to Mr. Watson, but rather of anxious and painful anticipation. The circumstances and the pain of the event sometimes alarmed him, and he shrank from the prospect of a season which he apprehended might be so fearful; but as the time drew near, he was blessedly prepared for the time of sickness and of the final conflict, and was 'more than conqueror' at last. From every account I have received, his illness and death exhibited, in a very unusual degree, the calm deliberate triumph of faith in Christ's sayings. His was not the mere triumph of joyous feeling, directly excited in the soul by an act of overwhelming mercy without any particular mental exertion, or the application of sacred truth: it was not the result of those secret refreshings which are poured into the heart without any exercise of the understanding. God often vouchsafes these to minds that need them—they whose intellectual faculties have been so untrained, or who are so unfurnished with materials as to render them accessible to Christian consolation only by immediate agency on the affections. Thus we are assured that God will afford sufficient help and comfort to all his dying servants, be their mental structure and attainments what they may. But it appears that, in Mr. Watson's case, help in time of need was adapted to the peculiarly intellectual character of his mind in a way very instructive. The Holy Spirit strengthened his faith rather than directly excited his feelings; it was a triumph of principles rather than powerful emotions. Or, perhaps, I should say, the joy he already felt was

seen in such prominent connexion with his faith, that the effect was almost overlooked, while the bystanders gazed on the process by which it was produced. Hence it came to pass that he died humbly, indeed, very humbly, as a sinner ought to die; and yet very majestically also—if I may so speak—through the grace of God which was upon him—grace, I think, which could have acted in that particular way only on a mind like his own—strong, vigorous, accustomed to high and lofty contemplation, richly furnished with the sayings of Christ, and familiarized by habit to the most sublime and heavenly views of truth. The effect was—as you heard from my venerable friend, Mr. Entwisle, on Tuesday—that his death-bed scene exhibited such a rare combination of humility and dignity, as that venerable minister had never before witnessed. His fears, as to the final struggle and the agonies of the last moment, were not realized; even the act of dying was quiet and sublime, and evinced no particular sufferings. His prayers, and that of thousands on that behalf, were in this respect mercifully answered. The transactions of the last fortnight of his life appear to have been marked by an uncommon calmness of spirit; and if there was submission to the work of death, it was not a false or compulsory submission, but the deliberate exercise of faith and obedience. He resigned his body to the tomb, and his soul to God; and in dying, only made that sacrifice complete in the support of which he had previously lived. Thus in a sense very important to himself, and very encouraging to those who have yet to encounter the last enemy, he did not see death.

I have been furnished, very kindly, from many friends with information concerning Mr. Watson since I arrived in town; but they reached me at so late a period that I had no time to take pains in the arrangement of them. Some of them relate to his general history, or in the way of narrative. These seem to me to belong to the future biographer rather than to the present preacher: I shall therefore at once call your attention to those communications which respect his dying moments and victory.

His affectionate colleague, Mr. Beecham, has made the following statement, which will, perhaps, well introduce this part of the narrative. 'Several months ago Mr. Watson's state of health began to awaken serious apprehensions in his own mind, and led him to regard it as in very great danger. He often adverted to the subject. I recollect distinctly a conversation I had with him, in which he dwelt on his situation and prospects with much feeling. He observed, that it seemed hard to have to die at a time which might be regarded as the palmy state of man, when he felt he could do more for Christ and the church than he ever had done; but added, "If I am cut short it will not be by chance: life and death

are at the disposal of an infinitely wise and good Being, and all will be right." After he had suffered for some weeks, on the periodical return of his complaint he had a paroxysm, the violence of which so prostrated his remaining strength, that it was scarcely thought he could survive another such attack. As however after this he remained free from pain longer than usual, it began to be hoped that the obstruction which caused this suffering had been removed. But these pleasing anticipations were soon checked. On the morning of Sunday, December 23rd, he told me he feared he might have a relapse as he had several unfavorable symptoms. He passed the following night in great pain. On my seeing him again, he said, "All prospect of my recovery is gone: this return of pain proves that the cause of my affliction remains. I have no hope now." I observed, that his case was discouraging, but that I did not despair, and did not like to see him abandon himself altogether; after a pause he replied, "There is no ground of rational hope left; nothing now remains for me but to address myself to the work of preparing soon to die." It was no common privilege to have an opportunity to witness a mind of such an order, thus grappling with the realities of death and eternity. He spoke of the losses the Connexion had recently sustained, and observed, that it required a lofty exercise of faith to keep firm hold of the doctrine of a future state, when we saw men thus cut down and trampled over by death.

'On Christmas day I found him so free from pain, that he could converse without difficulty. I was no sooner seated than he began —"Well, we are thrown back on those great principles which we preach—life is your's, death is your's, things present, things to come; all things work together for good to them that love God. Now here," said he, "are two points—first, are these things so? and have you an interest in them?" Having paused, as if in solemn consideration of these questions, he then said, with strong feeling, "Yes, these things are so; these principles are true; and blessed be God, I have an interest in them, but it is all through the blessed Spirit." After an interval of a few minutes, he exclaimed, "What a day was that when the blessed Spirit struck the light of heaven into our dark minds!" and then he went on to enlarge on our obligations to the Spirit of God for our religious enjoyments; showing that the impotent, depraved mind of man, would have no religious experience whatever, were it not for that Divine agent. On my remarking that it was a glorious reward to prove the reality and consoling power of the great truths on which he had spent his life, and in which he rested; "Yes," he said, "a minister has higher enjoyment than Christians in general; but they are exposed to greater temptations; he has a more awful responsibility, and greater is the guilt of an unfaithful minister. I feel these things to be so!"

He then dwelt on his own unworthiness and baseness, since he felt the worthlessness of his very best performances, and said his only hope was in the atonement of Christ; and proceeded to enlarge on the sufficiency of that atonement, on the infinite mercy which had provided such a salvation, and what we ought to make of it. Then, placing his attenuated hands together, and looking up to heaven with his eyes half closed, he said,

> "There on the golden altar laid,
> His Godhead with the manhood join'd;
> For every sin atonement made,
> And sure forgiveness there we find."

Then pausing, and looking for a few moments unutterable things, he added with uncommon pathos—

> "I the chief of sinners am,
> But Jesus died for me."

'It was on the following morning he gave up all public business. He had told me, some few days before, he wanted to talk to me; and being then comparatively easy, he laid on the table a small portfolio, and told me what he had been writing in reference to matters on which we had previously deliberated. After further conversation I gathered up only the papers we had been examining; but taking them out of my hands, he placed them in the portfolio, and said, "Here, take them altogether: If I get better I can take them back again, and if not, I must leave you and you must leave me." Never can I forget my feelings as I parted from the great and good man with whom I had had the honor of being associated in such great and good works, and whose friendship I had enjoyed.

'On a subsequent day he told me his arrangements for death were now nearly concluded, and talked about destroying his useless papers, and on his private affairs in general, with a calmness and composure that almost made me forget I was conversing with one who regarded himself as a dying man. This delightful fortitude was not a mere effort of the mind: I found him invariably the same. His dying was his common topic, and he dwelt much on the Providence which would deprive me of both my colleagues in so short a time, and did this with a composedness, that strikingly showed all was right with him. No occurrence prevented him from the great work of preparing for death. For a week before his change, the worst symptoms of his case were so far abated as to awaken some hope. He said to me one day, "I may so rally, as to be able to advise with you again;" but added, while the tears glistened in his eyes, "If not, blessed be his name, I am resigned to his will."

'His last sentiments on the subject of prayer, deserve notice. On my observing that his friends had agreed to have a meeting for prayer on his behalf, he leaned forward, and covering his face with his hands, said, "What am I that I should have an interest in the prayers of so many good people?" He repeatedly observed, in the course of his illness that were he to be raised again, it would be chiefly in answer to prayer; and to this cause he attributed the circumstance that his sufferings were so much mitigated, and that he enjoyed so much of the Divine presence in his affliction. The morning of the last Sabbath of his life was the very last on which he could sit up and converse. As I sat alone with him I made an observation respecting the Sabbath, on which he exclaimed, "Blessed day of rest!" and then dwelt on the engagements of the Sabbath, and its provision for the spiritual enjoyment of man himself. After we had spent some time in prayer, on parting, I said to him, "May the Lord of the Sabbath be with you!" to which he responded with fervor, "Amen, amen." He had a high sense of the importance of the Sabbatical institution for advancing the cause of religion: and he more than once said to me, on the morning of that day, when I have found him unable to stir out, "Another blessed Sabbath, in regard to public worship, must be a blank to me!"

'On the last day in which he was able to discourse at length, I sat with him a considerable time. I perceived that he remained in the same happy state. Such dignity with such humility—such intellectual power with such child-like simplicity—such patience under intense suffering—such indications of intercourse with God, and such out-burstings of holy joy, have been rarely witnessed in any dying saint. On entering his room one seemed to make a nearer approach to the presence of the Most High; and to engage in prayer with him was like going directly to the throne; and I cannot but notice, that it was a special mark of the favor of God, that as a smile of love gilded the dark cloud, the dying experience of our friend has been permitted to give such attestation to the realities of the truths which he maintained with consummate ability in life.'

The Rev. Mr. Marsden has furnished me with two or three incidents, which I will refer to. 'I had two interviews with Mr. Watson during his last illness, in both of which he was able to converse freely. His mind was peculiarly calm and tranquil. At each interview, after a little conversation we had prayer, and as I was afraid of his being too much fatigued, I was about to leave him, when he requested me to remain a little longer, and resumed the conversation. The last interview was on Saturday, December 29, after which, Mr. Dixon remarked, he was unable to hold any lengthened conversation with any friend. The following are among the

many pleasing remarks he made at these interviews:—"I have endeavored to do the will of God, though frequently with much weakness; yet I have endeavored to do it with sincerity. Sometimes by maintaining what I believed to be right, I have been brought into collision with other persons. I can say, I love my brethren, the preachers." He remarked, that for some time he had a desire to live a few years longer, that he might accomplish some matters that he thought might be useful; "But now," said he, "the desire of it is taken away." He then spoke of his unworthiness and of his firm reliance on the atonement of Christ, and said—

"A guilty, weak, and helpless worm,
On thy kind arms I fall;
Be thou my strength and righteousness,
My Jesus and my all!"

It was in the last interview I had with him that he remarked, he had no particular desire for life or for death. He then said, "Dying and death are two distinct things: there is something gloomy and melancholy in dying: death is nothing but as it opens the way to glory." Dwelling a little on his views of the Divine goodness, he said, "I seem like a worm creeping into the presence of the Divine glory and coming before the throne." In the same conversation, he remarked, "The Methodists have right views of the atonement, and happily know the way of coming to that atonement, and the right use to make of that important doctrine."'

Mrs. Dixon has most kindly furnished me with the following statement. 'On the Sunday previous to Christmas day, my dear father was free from acute pain, but in a state of great exhaustion. He seemed to be fully aware of his danger, but his mind was perfectly tranquil. Observing me weep, he said, "Compose yourself; keep your mind calm; commit the matter to Him who not only knows what is right but what is best. My flesh and my heart fail, but God is my rock. I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that when he shall appear, I shall appear with him—yes, I shall see him as he is." On my expressing a hope that the disorder had passed the crisis and that he would soon begin to rally, he said, "Oh, your affection makes you sanguine; but I wish neither to hope nor to fear, since he has not left me to choose for myself." In the evening of the same day, he requested me to read some of the hymns on the nativity, and while I was reading them, he responded to the sentiments contained in them with great fervor, and dwelt much on the majesty of the mercy of God in devising so magnificent a scheme.

'Commit thou all thy griefs to him—'

This, he said, comforted him much. Soon after, the pain returned with great violence, and from that time he relinquished all expectation of recovery. He continued in great agony till Monday, when he experienced some mitigation. On the following morning, Christmas day, he sent to me very early, and said to me, "My dear, this is Christmas day, the blessed morning on which Christ broke by his birth on a guilty world, when,

"Plunged in a gulf of dark despair,
We wretched sinners lay."

Oh, what a blessed Saviour! And here he is to sustain and comfort all men, in the dark and gloomy hours of pain, with bright hopes of immortal felicity!" I happened to be present during his interview with Mr. Marsden, when he said to Mr. Marsden, "I am very ill; but I am where we have so often placed others—in the hands of the Lord; he has imparted sweet consolation to me. We have not preached cunningly-devised fables. Oh, no! there is solid, real, substantial comfort and support in religion. I have been many times heavily afflicted, and have been brought often near to the waters, but have always found the rock beneath me. I have never been so powerfully impressed with a sense of my worthlessness as during this illness; and in the prospect of approaching God, I feel as a worm crawling into the brightness of the sun. I feel as if about to take my place near some glorious throne; but I wish to creep low, and feel my own nothingness." My dear father then expressed his satisfaction that the doctrine of the atonement was so clearly inculcated by our ministers, and that he was leaving our people so free from doctrinal agitation. "If," he said "I desire to live at all, it is to keep the fundamental doctrines of the Gospel before our people."

'Sunday, December 20, my father became much worse. While supporting his head, he looked in my face some moments, and said, in a very solemn and emphatical tone, "May the blessings of the upper and nether springs be your's for ever!" This was his parting benediction. From that time he said but little connectedly. May He who has inflicted the poignant wound, apply the balm and administer that consolation which our sorrows abundantly require!'

Another incident mentioned by Mrs. Dixon, was at once pleasing and instructive, and ought to be exemplified in the case of those who, like himself, are debarred from the public ordinances of religion. May it teach ministers how to improve silent sabbaths, and how Christians in general should behave in the house of mourning! 'It was my father's constant practice, when himself or my

mother was prevented from attending public worship, to read to her, in the forenoon, the Church Service, of which he always expressed himself in strong terms. He would not omit the Psalms, the Epistle, and the Collect for the day. My mother read the Litany, and my father responded.' [This refers to the last sabbath but two, I believe, before he died. I have heard in reference to this day, that, after the finishing of the reading, he selected some hymns to be read to him—that he then engaged in prayer in a manner very remarkable, and that he continued in that exercise nearly an hour.] 'In the evening, he selected generally one of Mr. Wesley's to be read; and then, with peculiar solemnity, read one of the hymns, and concluded again with prayer.'

The following is Mr. Dixon's account, 'One of the most prominent feelings of spirit manifested by Mr. Watson, at the approach of death, was a complete resignation to the will of God. By a mind so observant and well furnished with physical science, the progress and termination of his disease could not be disregarded. Hence, previously to the apprehension of danger by his family, he was observed to manifest evidence that his thoughts were seriously turned to the prospect of an early grave. Many actual expressions respecting the probability of this, threw grief and gloom over the hearts of those who loved him well. It was observed, that he was himself existing in an atmosphere of superior piety, and laboring for entire submission to the will of God. He watched the progress of his disease with some anxiety, and on every new manifestation or attack of pain, received a deeper impression of the probability of its final termination. The painful crisis at length arrived: he observed, "that, if another paroxysm came, he knew what he had to expect." The usual time came; and to others, if not to himself, the dreaded token; his medical attendant came in, and, as he was leaving, Mr. Watson exclaimed, "Good is the will of the Lord! remember this is my testimony." This resignation was not the prostration of a wearied and exhausted mind, by the effect of palsied debility or the incapacity to indulge the natural love of life. To him it was a salutary and religious effort: he sought grace from God, and obtained it; and was then enabled to "gird up the loins of his mind" to this great Christian duty. From this moment, neither his spirit nor his language ever betrayed the least want of resignation. He remarked, on several occasions, "I could have wished to have lived a few years longer, to finish some works of usefulness; but the Lord can do without any of us." He added, on one of these occasions, "I have often admired the perfect resignation of David when he said, 'Carry back the ark into the city: if I shall find favor in the eyes of the Lord, he will bring me back again, and show me both it and his habitation:' but, if he thus say, 'I have no

delight in thee; behold, here am I, let him do to me as seemeth good unto him,'—so I say: If the Lord has no delight in me, here am I: let him do what seemeth good unto him." His constant language was—"I have no wish either to live or to die; but that the will of God may be done." On one occasion, when one of his family expressed a hope of his recovery, he said, "It is the anxiety of affection, without any basis of reason to rest upon." And to those who had previously known the true excellence of his character, it is not matter of surprise to hear the circumstance on which he manifested the deepest humiliation of spirit. He was never a man to boast. His most intimate friends never heard from him the language of self-approval, but often the language of self-reproach.

'His views of the law of God, the obligation to holiness of life, the many and great excellencies necessary to complete the Christian character, were very exalted; and his standard of ministerial practice was placed so high, that, in the midst of the applause of others, he bowed in lowly submission before God, and to his intimate friends was constantly employing the language of sincere self-condemnation. This feature of his character came out in its full perfection towards the close of his life. While in health, he was never remarkably communicative on subjects of personal religion; but now he became as simple and as open as a child.

'He never had been accustomed to give vent to his feelings by tears, always restraining himself in the midst of intense emotion; but he now gave very full vent to the feelings of his heart. Tears of humiliation, intermingled with sacred joy, flowed in copious streams from his eyes. In this state of mind he often appeared to labor for language adequate to express his deep sense of humiliation.

'On one occasion, when visited by a venerable and respected brother minister, who remarked that it must have afforded him pleasure to state and defend the truth, to preach the Gospel to the edification of thousands, and especially to promote the cause of Christian missions, he said, "I thank God if I have at all helped to promote the doctrine and discipline of the Christian religion;" but added, he "placed no trust on this." He then made some remark on the motives by which he had been guided on some particular points. Towards the evening of that day he burst into tears, and addressing the persons attending him, said, "I hope I did not boast to Mr. ——— this morning. I thought it right just to say what I did; but God forbid that I should boast;" and then he exclaimed, in the greatest agitation, "O no! I am a poor vile sinner—a worm, and no man."

'In remarking on the goodness of God, in his early conversion, he observed—"How great was God's mercy in taking me up by his grace, in putting me into the ministry at so early a period, in

some respects, a most obstinate and refractory sinner!" His favorite expression, when speaking of his unworthiness, was to call himself "a worm." One night, moved by a sudden impulse, as he lay on his bed, he said, "I am a worm—a poor vile worm, not worthy to lift up its head;" but he added, with brightened features, "This worm is permitted to crawl out of the earth into the garden of its Lord, and there to enjoy the flowers and fruits, if it can, which sparkle in the palace and ivory throne of the New Jerusalem.

"I shall behold his face,
I shall his love adore,
And sing the wonders of his grace
For evermore."

There is doubt of every thing but the great deep infinite mercy of God, and that is sure." This deeply humble spirit was the element in which he appeared to exist. It prompted him to request the prayers of his friends, and to join most fervently in their supplications.

'On one occasion, when through great disability he had fallen into the arms of his attendant, he said, "Now kneel down and offer up prayer to God," responding as usual to every petition. On the same day, Sunday, he requested the Gospel and Epistle of the day to be read to him. Afterwards he said, "Read to me the *Te Deum;* I am very fond of that when I cannot go out on the Sabbath, because it seems to unite me in spirit with the whole Catholic Church on earth and in heaven." Innumerable expressions fell from his lips indicative of entire trust in the atonement of Christ for salvation. It appeared as if the Holy Spirit had taken up the blessings of the atonement, so boldly exhibited in his preaching and writings, and applied them to his own mind. Every thing he uttered on the subject of his own personal state, had a remote or direct reference to this great doctrine. "The atonement," he frequently remarked, "is the sinner's short way to God. On this rock I rest: I feel it firm beneath me—

"——How firm he proves!
The rock of ages never moves:
Yet the sweet streams that from him flow,
Attend us all the desert through."

I feel that I am on this rock. "In the Lord have I righteousness and strength."

"Fix'd on this ground will I remain,
Tho' my heart fail and fast decay;
This anchor shall my soul sustain,
When earth's foundations melt away.
Mercy's full power I then shall prove,
Loved with an everlasting love."

'On another occasion he exclaimed, "Oh, the blessed blood of Christ!" He remarked, that the epistle to the Romans was very rich, especially the third chapter, setting forth the atonement—"Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood"

"I the chief of sinners am,
But Jesus died for me."

In speaking of the Divine attributes, his mind dwelt almost exclusively on that of mercy. The attention of his friends or his medical attendants, and the smallest acts of kindness, drew forth expressions of gratitude, and he would exclaim, "It is all of mercy!" The last vigorous remark he made, was to one of his attendants, reminding him that the Lord had been gracious in raising him a little, after a period of speechless lethargy: he adopted the usual word and said, "It is all of mercy!"

'He spoke of his ministry, and exclaimed again, "It is all of mercy!" On one occasion he observed, that he wished every moment to keep his mind stayed on God; but in consequence of his weakness and suffering, found it difficult. He wished to have his feelings elevated on the great subject of religion; but experienced, what he believed many others in similar circumstances often do, a difficulty of realizing the blessings of religion. "All that I can do in my circumstances," said he, "is to repose on the Divine mercy; and it is the nature of that mercy to pity the infirmities and sufferings of its children." His mind was relieved by that consideration, and on that mercy he relied with calm resignation. At another time, with great feeling, he remarked, "There is no rest or satisfaction for the soul but in God—my God. I am permitted to call him, *my God*. "O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is; to see thy power and thy glory, so as I have seen thee in the sanctuary. Because thy loving-kindness is better than life, my lips shall praise thee. Thus will I bless thee while I live: I will lift up my hands in thy name. My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness; and my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips: when I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate upon thee in the night watches. Because thou hast been my help, therefore in the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice."

'Great tenderness and maturity of love manifested itself in his last affliction, and we have no doubt this has ripened into evangelical perfection. Nothing but feelings of entire tenderness were expressed to those around him. He said he loved his brethren, and indeed there was no class of men for whom he had so strong an affection. He added, he knew his manner had sometimes appeared cold, dis-

tant, and reserved to some. This had been attributed to motives which had no existence. He also said that the preachers were exposed to peculiar mental temptations, prejudices, and passions, though of one brotherhood. It was necessary to guard against them, and to cultivate brotherly love.

'To a lively and believing apprehension of the heavenly and invisible state, in combination with an assurance of his own interest in Christ, he joined a complete victory over the fear of death. This is the more remarkable, when it is known that death, when in a state of health, was no favorite subject with him, and he evidently shrunk from the consideration of it, if not with pain, at least with some apprehension. This was entirely removed, and he was not only willing to die, but welcomed death with joy. He remarked that the prospect was gloomy as regards this life; but yet, as regards the future, it was like the shining of the sun, which was then shining into the room, through the mist and gloom of a wintry morning. At another time, in a state of deep feeling, he said, "When shall my soul leave this tenement of clay, to join in the wide expanse of the skies, and rise to nobler joys, and to see God?" He then repeated his favorite sentence—

"I shall behold his face,
I shall his love adore,
And sing the wonders of his grace
For evermore."

'In a happy state of mind he burst forth, but a short time before he was deprived of the power of connected speech, and exclaimed, "We shall see strange sights some day, not different, however, from what we might now realize by faith; but it is not the glitter and the glare, not the diamond and the topaz; no, it is God I want to see: he is all and in all."

'During a few of the last hours of his life he sunk into a state of lethargy, appearing almost insensible. This rendered him nearly incapable of the use of speech; no conversation could be held with him; but at intervals he seemed to be engaged in devotional exercises. At length the moment of dissolution approached; and without any apparent pain or convulsive struggle, his sanctified spirit left its tabernacle of clay and entered the world of rest, at ten minutes past eight on Tuesday evening, January the 8th, within a very few days of having accomplished his fifty-second year.'

I am afraid I shall fatigue you in some respects, yet this is no common occasion. I think you will agree with me, that we ought thankfully to devote more time than ordinary for the purpose of trying to make a right use and improvement of this event. I have not wrought with the materials which I have for the purpose of

elucidating any thing like Mr. Watson's general history; that I leave. Something ought, however, to be said, in a more summary way, respecting his general character, but especially respecting the character of his public ministry. This, I believe, I shall do most to your profit, by reading a letter received from an excellent friend, who knew him and loved him well.

'I believe I shall find an echo in your heart, when I express my conviction, that in the late awful bereavements which it has pleased a gracious, though inscrutable Providence to inflict on our Connexion, one of the brightest lights has been extinguished that ever irradiated our earthly boundary with hallowed and heaven-enkindled beams. I have been privileged to listen to the message of mercy from the lips of our late beloved friend and minister, the Reverend Richard Watson, and I shall always account it among the chief blessings for which I owe an unbounded debt of gratitude to the great Author of all good. He touched a chord in my heart that awakened its deepest sympathy. With a knowledge of whatever is profound in the sublime mysteries of our common religion, and the contrite humiliation which becomes a sinful being in the presence of a just and holy God, he was so instructed to unfold the method and way of redemption, as to ensure a confidence of faith, and an elevation of hope and love, on the subjects connected with the Divine glory, as displayed in the scheme of salvation. His own thoughts were sublime, comprehensive, and profound. Those thoughts he labored to convey to others, and while under the influence of his impressive eloquence, the serious mind partook of his expanses; and, ascending on the wings of pure devotion, left the world and all its unsubstantial events, to taste the holy pleasures of religion; resolved to consecrate his spirit, with its whole intenseness of feeling and thought and principle, to God, its proper centre, and to make the interests of eternity its chief concern. Nor were these results produced by an artificial or diffuse style of ornate rhetoric. No declamatory diction was employed to captivate the senses. His instrument was scriptural truth: the mode of his warfare was a calm, clear, earnest annunciation of that truth to those who heard it. It was delivered, indeed, through the medium of a mind capable of descending very much below the common scale of thought, and of scaling heights which far exceeded the general level. His theology was impressed with a rich evangelical character, and when he viewed his fallen state, as a creature alienated from God, dark was the picture he exhibited of a spirit found in a state of enmity to Him whose favor alone is life. But redemption was his favorite theme; he stood beneath the cross in adoring contemplation, and rejoiced to point sinners to "the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world!" His views of the largeness of redeeming mercy

were bounded only by the extent of human misery. In the name of his Master he offered a free and full salvation to the whole world: and how often have our hearts burned within us when he expatiated on the benefits accruing to believers from the great sacrificial offering which, "through the eternal Spirit, was presented without spot" unto God? Remission of all sin through faith in the efficacy of that atonement, and a sense conscious of acceptance witnessed by the Spirit of adoption and regeneration, from its first principle to its maturity, in the attainment of "the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ,"—these were the truths on which he ordinarily exercised his hallowed functions—on which he brought to bear all the faculties of his richly endowed mind. He brought to them thoughts and feelings which made them live with new vividness in the consciences and hearts and understandings of his hearers. On these subjects from a sense of their primary importance, in the latter years of his ministry he more especially and most emphatically dwelt; but he commonly enlarged the extent of his flight; never, however, forgetting his principal union to his great Centre, and returning from his most excursive flights to that hallowed refuge whence he plumed his wing.—On the mysteries of Divine Providence he exercised an expansive range. The kingdoms of this world, and their fleeting vanities, passed before the eye of his faith as performing their successive revolutions under the unerring guidance of His almighty hand. He traced all sublunary empire to its connexion with the church of Christ, and beheld the Spirit in the living wheel, subordinating all things to the final purposes of omniscient wisdom and eternal knowledge. On this consideration of the Mediatorial scheme, he expatiated, occasionally, with that profound anticipation which transported those who heard him into distant scenes and unknown regions, where the spiritual faculties sink under the overwhelming impression of eternal joys. The solemn transition of the spirit, through death, to the realities of the invisible world, was another subject which called forth great intensity of thought, feeling, and expression.—On the hallowed joys of Paradise, when mortality shall be swallowed up of life, he would also delightfully enlarge. Feeling the blessings of Divine communion, and heightening his ideas by his sublime conceptions of eternity and disentanglement from terrestrial objects, he would by the hand of faith lift up the veil, and endeavor to show that the prize of eternal life was worth the winning—that the joys of heaven will more than compensate for all the sacrifices they were called to make.—On the triumphs of the resurrection scene, when the Redeemer shall stand and call forth the sons of God to receive their ratified adoption in the presence of the universe,—he was wont to dwell with an energy that made every interest, unconnected with the great and terrible real-

ities of heaven, appear of less importance than the passing moment.—On the deliverance of the creation from corruption and vanity, he also dwelt; and anticipated the accomplishment of every promise of Holy Writ. I feel, as I proceed to sketch even the lineaments of that mind beneath whose power my spirit has so frequently sunk subdued, a wish that I could transfer to my paper the deep impression received under his ministry, when, with all the sanctity of hallowed feeling and all the power of intense thought, he has opened the subjects at which I have now glanced, with all their connecting links of holiness and truth. Though my pinion refuses to lift a flight so lofty as that to which the eagle aspires, yet my eye follows him in his ascending, and I rejoice that I can so far track the progress of so bright a spirit in his upward journey.'

I believe I must now close these papers. I appeal to you whether you have not heard described the character of a man who eminently kept the saying of Christ—in whom Divine truth dwelt richly, and produced Divine fruit; and whether you have not reason to 'thank God and take courage' for having heard these details of our departed friend; and discerned a new proof that God supports his people in their extremity; and that 'if a man keep Christ's saying, he shall never see death,'—he shall, through death, triumphantly come to God. Heaven has, in this instance, claimed its own, and earth has lost its view of one of the most brilliant stars that was ever exhibited in our part of the Christian world. Let us be thankful that we rejoiced in his light—he was a burning and a shining light; and let us individually listen to those truths which he has embodied in his written works, and profit by our recollection of his sermons and conversations; for he 'though dead, yet speaketh.'

I cannot allow you to depart without suggesting a few hints that have occurred to me, as to the special improvement which we ought to make of this and similar visitations which have lately occurred in our Connexion. This event, in connexion with several of like afflictive character, loudly calls us to seriousness, to self examination, and to humiliation before Almighty God. Seventeen preachers of our body have died since the last Conference!—seven in six months, whose names were on the list of our London station; among whom two were of first-rate eminence—Clarke and Watson; two, at least, who were men of great usefulness in their station—James and Storry; and all of them amiable, worthy, and exceedingly valuable in the place assigned to them by the great Head of the Church. Two out of the three Secretaries to our Missionary Committee have been taken away in two months, or less! Both the persons appointed at our last Conference to attend our President to the next Conference in Ireland, are removed: they are gone to the Conference above—Dr. Clarke was one, Mr. James was the other

Is it quite unseasonable or unimportant, under such visitations, for your minister to inquire—and he does it with all humility—does not all this look like some special visitation—some controversy of God with us? Does it not seem to bid us say, 'O Lord, wherefore contendest thou with me?' Have we provoked the Lord to jealousy by idolizing any of his ministers, and depending more on human instruments than on the agency of his own holy and eternal Spirit? Or have we provoked him by undervaluing and underrating his servants, by treating them or their office with unbecoming indifference and disrespect—by hindering instead of helping them in their great work? These, I think, are questions which the Methodists in general, and the Methodists in London in particular, on whose ministers the work of death has fallen with such astounding severity, ought to put to themselves. Truly excellent and affectionate as I know many of the friends connected with these circuits are, and long devoted to God and his good cause,—they will pardon me, in saying, that they will perhaps do well to put inquiries like these I have suggested, to their own consciences, at a time like the present.

Or can it be, that times of peculiar temptation to the church, and of peculiar anxiety to its most unwearied and thoughtful friends, are approaching—that a proud and fierce and austere spirit of strife and secular contention is likely to infect, defile, and destroy even some parts of the family of God—that, in judgment to others or in mercy to ourselves, the men who, in such a crisis are not to be spared, are taken away from the evil to come, hid from the strife of tongues in the secret place of God's heavenly tabernacle?

Or can it be, that our Connexion at large has been somewhat ungrateful for the many valuable ministers with which the Head of the Church has, from time to time, supplied us? Have they forgotten, in any instance or degree, that such ministers are amongst the choicest gifts of the glorified Saviour to the people he loves? and that what is true of nations is equally true of communities also—that God's providential method to make them great and prosperous, is by raising up amongst them men eminent for talent, for holiness, and for virtue? Have we really to be reminded of any or all of these things, by breach upon breach, and stroke upon stroke?

But even if there be nothing of retribution—nothing of rebuke or chastisement in these visitations, there is, at all events, much of admonition and instruction in them. Let us, then, humbly acknowledge the frailty of our human nature. Let us be impressed with a survey of the desolation death is making in our families, our friendships, our congregations; and apply ourselves to the work of preparation for our speedy dissolution; for 'all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass;' only 'the word of the

Lord,' and the hope and the comfort that abide in it, 'stand for ever.' 'Let your loins be girded about and your lights burning; and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their Lord, that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately. Blessed are those servants whom the Lord, when he cometh, shall find watching: and if he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants. Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not. Blessed is that servant whom his Lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing.' Let us be concerned for our bereaved churches and congregations, deprived of such able and influential ministers, and, by this last stroke, deprived of its highest living ornament. Now is the time to exclaim, 'Where is the Lord God of Elijah?' Let us encourage ourselves by this—both the gifts and the graces of ministers come from him, and with him is the residue of the Spirit. He can find or make fit instruments for his own work; and can save by many or by few—by men of gigantic stature or by men of far inferior intellectual grade, but especially made wise by his wisdom and filled with his Spirit. We have much encouragement to hope in his mercy amidst all these desolations. This has been a year, hitherto, of unprecedented visitation by death, as it respects the preachers and pastors of our Connexion. But there has been also an unprecedented visitation in the way of mercy, in the various revivals of religion in various parts of our body. The Lord's arm is not shortened, nor his ear heavy, nor his Spirit restrained among us. And now that our ranks are thinned, let us draw more and more closely towards each other—be more united in brotherly affection, in pious zeal, in benevolent effort; frowning with just indignation on every attempt to weaken our strength; our devotion, by our compactness and concentration, endeavoring to make up whatever we have lost in point of numbers, and looking to the Author of all good for such an increase of our graces and energies and resources, as shall more than compensate, eventually, for any diminution of external splendor and magnificence. Take courage, my brethren; and 'the best of all is, God is with us,' and will be with us while we shall be with him, by a faithful, united, and fearless exhibition of those pure doctrines and that holy discipline, which our fathers and predecessors defended and set up in his name. Sacred and dear are their memories that are dead; but 'the Lord liveth, and blessed be our rock, and let the God of our salvation be exalted.'

May he bestow his blessing on what has been said, calculated to advance his glory, for the Redeemer's sake! Amen.

EXTRACT FROM A SERMON

Preached in Liverpool, by Dr. Adam Clarke, a few weeks previous to his death.

Repent ye, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.' Acts, iii. 19.

THERE is a reference here to a custom very frequent in ancient times, before you and your fathers were born. When paper was scarcely known, and parchment was the only thing used to make books of, and to make entries upon, there was a method of discharging the ink from the parchment, or vellum, on which something not of the most important kind had been written, but important for the time, and of writing down in the place which other writing had occupied, a different kind of writing. I have myself books of this description, where perhaps, seven or eight hundred years ago, a piece of writing had been discharged in all its letters; but in places of the margin which were not needed to write the new thing on, you see the remains of the old letter. When religion became a subject of national concern, many of the ancient books had their writings erased by art, for the purpose of writing others in their place. I myself have seen the Gospel of St. Matthew, written in the twelfth or thirteenth century, over a writing of a much more ancient date. That interesting Codex is in Trinity College, Dublin, and even the ancient writing was wonderfully made out by the Rev. Dr. Barrett, who discovered it, and died Vice-Provost of that University. Here, then, we have the thing referred to. Here is the writing—it is in God's possession—he only can discharge it—he can write a new name upon it—he can take away the charges that are written in the book, and registered also in your conscience, for conscience receives impressions of them from that

book—he can discharge them so that the keenest eye shall not be able to find out the sins that you have committed, and which, if published before assembled worlds, would sink you to annihilation. In that case, the man is in no apprehension ; he was so ; but the hand-writing of ordinances that was against him is taken out of the way—the charges have been erased—they have been washed away ; so that, not only God's book—God's justice—that wondrous Remembrancer registers nothing against the transgressor, because he has beeen forgiven all ; but when the man comes to look into his own soul, to see the old charges, he finds them all gone !

Would you let an old man, that will not trouble you very long, just tell you how he felt when God shone upon his soul ? Whereever I looked I had God's holiness and my own heart brought, as it were, parallel—there was not a charge that God had against me registered in his book, but I felt, as it were, here, in my conscience and heart ; when in crying to him for mercy, after a deep night of repentance, which I shall explain in a little in reference tc yourselves, I found all my load of anxiety and fear and dismay removed from my mind : I looked up to heaven, and saw nothing but glory there—I looked up to God, and saw nothing but my Father there—I looked up to Jesus, and saw nothing but my Saviour there—I looked up to the Holy Ghost, and saw him smilingly registering my salvation there—I looked within, I saw not a character to charge me there. I felt as if I had never sinned against my Maker, and yet conscious that I had done so ; with the fullest consciousness, at the same time, that all was blotted out from God's book and my own too.

'Repent, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out !' Repent, because you know you have sinned ! Repent, therefore, because God has made a way for your escape ! Repent, therefore, for the judgment has not seized your soul, and carried it away into the eternal world ! Repent, because you have so many means of grace and so many hopes of glory promised to you ! But what is repentance ? Why, it is sorrow for sin. But is it not more than this ? Repentance implies regret, but it implies also a knowledge that the thing has been done ; and hence, our word, signifying repentance, has been interpreted after-thought, after-wisdom. For instance : a man has done some sin : he thought upon this ; he thought upon it, in reference to the individual that suffered the injury—he thought upon it in reference to himself, for he should not have done it—and he thought upon it in reference to the great God against whom it was committed, and in thus thinking about it, his eye affected his heart. This is the reason why the word signifies after-thought, after-wisdom, and so on. So that it appears, a man must be at home in order to begin the

work of repentance; and he must endeavor to continue at home, to see the nature of the work, and see how it goes on. I mean that he should look into his own heart, and see the black characters there in such a way, that he sees the finger of God has written them as truly as he knows that that finger wrote the Decalogue on the two tables of stone that Moses brought down from the mountain.

But repentance implies, also, that we forsake sin. The man that sees he has thus sinned, that his sin is thus registered (as his conscience does not tell him a lie, and he does not believe that this book would tell him a falsity), this man, I say, begins to think,—I must cease from this way: if I go on I shall perish. And, perhaps, he will take a common way of reasoning—Ten to one I may perish after all; but if there be one chance, humanly speaking, to a thousand or to ten millions, why then, surely I should strive to get this chance fulfilled; for there is a hell of fire that burns for ever and ever—there is a justly offended God that will not forgive iniquity, unless the man repent of it, and unless he accept the ransom that God has provided for him. My friends, I beseech you to look into your souls, and see if you have repentance. As sure as God made you, you have sinned—not less than the Jews to whom Peter addressed the words of the text; nay perhaps, you have had crimes of a new fashion, and tenfold ungodliness, all of which must be repented of, abandoned, and fled from. Repent then—begin to sorrow! Can you think of having ever lifted up your hand against the God of eternal mercy—against the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ—against him that shed his blood for you—against the Holy Spirit that has been divinely affecting you, breathing into you his influence, and causing his light to shine through you, and giving you every now and then, a glimpse of God's glory, and shedding a hope through your minds that maketh not ashamed?—can you think of having sinned in all these ways, and offended such a God, such a Saviour, such a Spirit of sanctification and holiness, against the Eternal Trinity, the God that never did you any hurt, that has fed you all your life long—while not one thousandth part of a second of time you have a right to, your life itself being forfeited—can you think of having sinned against a God that has given you the Bible and faithful preachers, and opportunities of hearing his word preached, and all the other mercies that you enjoy, without sorrow and contrition and humiliation of mind?

Through the infinite mercy of God, we have seen the commencement, and now about the middle hour, of the seventh Sunday in Trinity. Well, my friends, we may never see another hour; but I would not alarm you about these things. I think it is possible most of you will live hours and months and years. I would

not alarm you as though your salvation were so much in hazard, as that though you began now, it could not probably be accomplished. I will pledge myself, that if you will begin now, seriously and in earnest, to consider your ways and repent and be converted, God will neither let Cholera nor devil take you away, or let one of you fall into the grave till he has accomplished so good a work in you. Take courage, then.

But, if repentance signifies forsaking sin, what is to be understood by being converted? It is necessary to define this word; and then I shall show you some nonsense that has been attached to it. Conversion, in this place, absolutely signifies a turning to God, and receiving him in the manner in which he offers himself, and receiving that which he has appointed for our salvation. A sinner is represented with heaven behind him and hell before him, while every step he takes—and he often runs—is a step nearer to hell and farther from that heaven of glory: he has got into the counterpart of the way, and while he goes in that way, he cannot be saved—he must turn again—he must come back. The first thing, then, you are to do, is, that you be converted to look towards God—to turn yourselves towards God and heaven—that you cease from running in that way that leads to perdition, and take the road that leads to heaven. "Be converted!" But we take this word in all its meaning, in general; and I think in some portions of God's word it is so taken in all its meaning; and the particular meaning is, not only a turning in purpose and intention, and in the position of the body, so that the man ceases to go in the bad way, but it denotes the whole heart being turned to God, embracing his will, receiving his mercy, pouring out itself in prayer before him, and taking in that wondrous act of God, the blotting out of the man's sin, and his receiving the witness of the Spirit, that he is a son of God. The man is said to be converted, that is, turned to God with all his soul—that is, turned to holiness with all his heart—that is, turned from sin with all his might—and turned from the workers of iniquity, to find association and companionship with those who work righteousness and are going to glory.

But, we have a variety of words that we join with conversion, and that perplex and spoil rather than explain its meaning. Thus, we say that such a man was *soundly* converted to God. What does that mean? Then, is there a possibility of being unsoundly converted? What is unsound conversion? It is no conversion at all. Then we have another word,—we say, such an one has been *savingly* converted to God,—while being converted means the one proper thing. There can be no conversion but one; and when you say that the man is converted to God, it says all—that he has been

brought to God, and has found the salvation purchased by his Redeemer. But then we see he becomes sound in his mind, and the evidence of his salvation is given in his conduct—we see that this is not hypocritical, because he is living in the way in which God would have him to live. The words, we add, spoil its meaning—add nothing of force to it; and we had better be as simple as we can in the terms that express the salvation of the soul.

Now, my friends, we must be converted, not according to this or that definition of this or that church's catechism; we must be converted as God says it—we must have our minds and hearts turned unto him from evil; and in this turning is always implied a change of the heart, of its purposes, its feelings, its resolutions, its propensities: the whole man is turned to God—"Old things are passed away, and all things have become new;" and in this sense the man is a new creature, who is in Christ Jesus. The man turns to God with all his heart, under a deep sense of his sin and sinfulness, and believes in Jesus Christ who died for him; for Peter, in the context, is preaching about Jesus, and showing that this was the key-stone of Christianity; and we take up the same thing—we cannot come to God but through Jesus. And I doubt, my friends, notwithstanding all that the vain young lady said of the wondrous powers of her reason, we should never feel one penitential pang, if the Spirit did not bring it into the soul; and when we feel our hearts truly sorry for sin, we know that the Spirit of God is at work upon us. We must, then, come to God through Christ Jesus.

This register is still in my eye: in reference to many of you, I seem to see the black register in so many bosoms; and I am sure there is not a single heart that may not be saved from it: it may be blotted out before you leave this chapel; and I pray God it may be so! I say, Almighty Jesus cancel it, and let none of them take the black list away with them? Let every one repent and be converted, and be enabled to lay hold on the hope set before them in the Gospel.

SERMON XXIII.

THE RESURRECTION.

BY REV. J. KEYES,
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'But some man will say, how are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come forth?' 1 CORINTHIANS, XV. 35.

THE Christian religion opens to the pious mind, the most sublime, and noble subjects of contemplation. Among these, the resurrection has a high claim on our attention. It is one of the main pillars that supports the fair fabric of Christianity. With it, the religion of the bible stands or falls. But there were some in the Christian Church, as early as the days of St. Paul, who denied the resurrection of the body, and taught, that when we die, we shall sink into an eternal slumber. And even at the present day, there are whole sects, who take upon themselves the name of Christians, that advocate the same sentiment. This was among other controversies that agitated the Corinthian Church. St. Paul takes up the subject, and in a most masterly manner, proves, that there will be a general resurrection.

I. 1. We shall show that there will be a resurrection of the body. This may be argued from the analogy of nature. The sun sinks behind the western hills, but it is to rise again with greater splendor in the morning. When winter approaches, the trees throw off their foliage. Nature is disrobed of her livery of green; the earth is bound in adamantine chains of frost; insects lie dormant; beasts retire to their dens; birds take their flight to more friendly climates; the earth is covered with a white mantle of snow, and the north winds rudely whistle around our dwellings. Nature suffers a temporary death. But when the spring arrives, the earth is warmed by the cheering influence of the sun; nature decks herself in living green; creation smiles with beauty; the voice of the turtle is heard in our land, and the time of the singing of birds is come; every object is full of animation. Thus we see a resurrection continually taking place before our eyes. If God, by his watchful providence, quickens creation into life, after it

has suffered a temporary death or suspension of its vital powers, reasoning from analogy, may we not fairly conclude it is probable God will raise the dead from the silent slumbers of the tomb?

2. The resurrection of the dead may be proved from the resurrection of Christ. That Christ was apprehended, condemned, and nailed to the cross, in the presence of a large concourse of friends and enemies, is not denied by Infidels themselves. And when it was ascertained he was dead, a soldier pierced him in his side, and there came out blood and water, a circumstance which proves the spear pierced the pericardium, and penetrated the heart. Had he not already been dead, this wound must have proved mortal. Then Joseph, of Arimathea, by the permission of Pilate took down the body of Jesus, embalmed it in aromatics, and laid it in a new tomb. But as though Providence designed his triumph over the power of death should be as complete as possible, 'The chief priests and scribes came together unto Pilate, saying, sir, we remember this deceiver said while he was yet alive, after three days I shall arise again—command, therefore, that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest his disciples come by night and steal him away, and say unto the people, he is risen from the dead, so the last error shall be worse than the first. Pilate said unto them, ye have a watch, go, make it as sure as you can; so they went and made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone and setting a watch. But as the morning of the third day began to dawn on the world, one of the heavenly inhabitants, stretched out his golden pinions, and flew swift to the hill of Calvary. His countenance was as the sun, and he was clothed with lightning. He rolled back the stone from the door of the sepulchre and sat upon it, and for fear of him the keepers did tremble and became as dead men. Now his triumph began. He rose; He rose with all the grandeur of a God, triumphing over Death and Hell. He burst the bars of the tomb; he seized immortal youth, and passed the crystal portals of everlasting light. The watch went immediately into the city and showed these things to the Scribes and Chief Priests. "And when they had taken council, they gave them large money, and said unto them—Say, his disciples came by night and stole him away while we slept." But this report carried its own refutation with it; for how did they know what happened while they were under the dominion of sleep. How did they know but he had actually risen from the dead. Besides, according to the Roman law, it was death for a soldier to be found sleeping at his post; therefore had they suffered themselves to sink, under the dominion of sleep, in such circumstances, they never would have dared to make the confession. Also, if we may judge from the well known character of the Scribes and Pharisees, they would have been among the first to urge an execution of this

law. Likewise, how unlikely does it appear, that a few timid disciples, who, when their Lord was apprehended, instantly forsook him and fled, although then there was no immediate prospect of danger to themselves; should, amidst the thick gloom of midnight, approach his sepulchre and steal away his body, although they knew it was secured by a guard of Roman soldiers. St. Paul testifies, 'He was seen of above five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greatest part remain until this present, but some are fallen asleep.' When we consider the number and character of the enemies of Christianity, and the situation of the disciples of Christ, if St. Paul was a man of ordinary penetration, he never would have made this declaration had it not been true. Had it been false, it would have been the easiest thing in the world to detect the imposition. And when we consider that the most learned and acute philosophers, statesmen, orators, and literary men of every description, were among the most rancorous enemies of Christianity, if the declaration had been untrue, its falsity would certainly have been exposed; the consequence would have been the ruin of the character of the Apostle and the destruction of the cause of Christianity. But the declaration of the Apostle was never shown us to be untrue—therefore we take it for granted, that it could not be refuted. Besides, it is not the character of imposture to be thus bold, but it seeks to entrench itself behind falsehood, that cannot be easily detected. But if Christ has risen from the dead, we conclude there will be a general resurrection; says the Apostle, 'Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you there is no resurrection of the dead. But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen; and if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain.' St. Paul lays down the resurrection of Christ as his premises; on this ground he proceeds, and from this he draws his conclusions. Therefore, if there was a literal resurrection of the body of Christ, there will be a literal resurrection of our bodies; otherwise there is no connexion between his premises and conclusion. Hence the Apostle concludes; 'Now has Christ risen from the dead and become the first fruits of them that slept'.

3. Some have already risen from the dead, therefore we conclude *all* will rise. Enoch and Elijah have been translated, and with the identical bodies which they possessed on earth have gone up into heaven. At the crucifixion of Christ the graves were opened, and after his resurrection many bodies of saints that slept arose and came out of their graves, and went into the holy city and appeared unto many. Here we are informed, some of the saints have actually ascended to heaven with their bodies, without passing under the dominion of death, which is equivalent to a resurrection.

Others have actually risen with their triumphant Lord. These are the first fruits, who are to be regarded as a pledge of a future and an abundant harvest.

4. The resurrection may be proved from the unequivocal declarations of scripture. Says Christ, the time is coming in the which they that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the son of God, and come forth, they that have done well to the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil to the resurrection of damnation. Here our Lord assures us, they that are in the grave shall come forth, and that there shall exist the same distinction of character that now exists, they that have done well and they that have done evil. And some shall come forth to the resurrection of life, and others to the resurrection of damnation, according to the character they have formed in time. This cannot mean a spiritual resurrection, for none who are partakers of the spiritual resurrection are raised up to damnation, but they are quickened to the enjoyment of spiritual life. To destroy the force of these observations, it has been urged, Christ says, 'The time is coming, and now is in which the dead shall hear the voice of the son of God, and they that hear shall live.' From which it has been argued, this means a spiritual resurrection, because Christ says, 'The time now is;' this conclusion we deny, and maintain it refers to the literal resurrection of those who are quickened by the power of Christ, when he tabernacled in the flesh, such as Lazarus and others. From which he takes occasion to observe, he will finally raise all men. Says St. Paul, I have hope in God (which ye yourselves allow) that there shall be a resurrection both of the just and the unjust—that at the resurrection this distinction of character shall not be done away, but mankind shall appear in the same character they formed in time.

II. First; we proceed to inquire how are the dead raised up? On this subject it is well known different opinions have been entertained by those who believe in the resurrection. Some suppose there is an *indestructable* principle in the human system analagous to the germ in the grain, out of which the body will be produced at the resurrection. A passage that stands in close connexion with our text has been most confidently produced to support this sentiment. 'Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened except it die, and that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat or some other grain. But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body.' But we cannot persuade ourselves that the body will be produced out of any such germ. The sentiment the Apostle inculcates is simply this: as the grain is cast into the earth, and the farinacious particles die and form a fine mould which nourishes

the germ, so that it springs up and produces the blade—then the ear—afterwards the ripe corn in the ear; and this can only be effected by the special superintending providence of God. So, although the body may die, be cast into the earth and be decomposed, yet God is able to raise it from the dead. This appears still more clear from the fact, that the same form of expression was used by our Lord in reference to his own resurrection—Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die it bringeth forth much fruit. It is certain the body of our Lord never saw corruption, and therefore the body with which he arose was never produced out of any such germ. Besides, this would destroy the very idea of a resurrection, for this would imply either a creation of new matter, or the addition of much matter that was never before connected with the body; in either case it would not be a resurrection, but a new production.

2. But it may be said, large quantities of matter are thrown off from our bodies by perspiration, and by other means our bodies are continually wasting away. This waste is supplied by the nourishment we take. Hence it would be absurd to suppose that every particle of matter that was ever connected with our bodies, shall be raised. We reply, to establish the idea of a resurrection, it is not necessary to make it appear, that every particle of matter that was ever connected with our bodies shall be raised, but only that body that shall be laid in the grave. This was the case in our Lord's resurrection.

3. It has been objected that when we die, our bodies are decomposed, they float on the breeeze—are agitated on the wave—flourish in the grass—vegetate in the trees, or enter into the constitution of some other animal body. How, then, will it be possible for God to raise the dead? God can so watch over our dust as to prevent it from entering into the constitution of any other body. This would require no greater display of a watchful Providence, than is daily exhibited before our eyes. And should not God see fit to do this, he is able to restore to each one his proper dust. Who that properly contemplates the wisdom, and power of God, can for a moment doubt this. Lift your eyes above you, contemplate the sun, moon, and stars: cast your eyes downwards, and contemplate the earth which you inhabit, with all its appendages. What an amazing display of the wisdom and power of God. Who that properly considers the infinite resources of the Deity, can for one instant doubt his ability to raise the dead?

III. The Apostle asks, with what body do they come forth? He proceeds to answer the question, by pointing out several important particulars, in which our bodies at the resurrection shall be different from what they are now.

1. It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption. It was the original design of God, that the body of man should be immortal, but he suspended that immortality on the condition of obedience. This may be inferred from Divine immutability. If God is immutable, He cannot entertain two opposite designs, at the same time, in relation to the same being; therefore he could not at the same time have a design to create man, and a design to destroy him. Hence, it must have been his original design, that man should not pass under the dominion of death. The fact that death was the penalty of transgression, confirms the same sentiment. Said God, 'In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.' Or more agreeable to the nervous original—dying thou shalt die; that is, thou shalt be brought into a dying, languishing condition, and continue in this state until death shall strike the last blow. St. Paul tells us, death came by sin, so death hath passed upon all men, for that all have sinned;—not that all have sinned in their persons; but Adam, our progenitor, transgressed—and the effects of his transgression are so far imputed to us, that in consequence of it, we are rendered mortal. Hence says the Apostle, death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression—that is, over infant children, who were never guilty of actual transgression. Therefore in consequence of the introduction of sin into the world, the seeds of dissolution are sown in our bodies, so that there is in us, a constant tendency to decay. This principle will finally gain the ascendency over us, and our bodies will sink down to the grave and become a mass of putrefaction. It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption. When our bodies are raised, they will contain no seeds of dissolution—no tendency to decay—but they will be constituted immortal. The union, between the soul and body, will no more be dissolved, but will be perpetuated while eternity endures.

2. It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. The human body possesses a majesty and an elegance, which is not equalled by any other animal on earth. Man walks erect. He bears his Maker's countenance, and looks upward to his own hereditary skies. The majestic form, the expressive countenance, and the eye flashing intelligence, strikes the beholder with admiration. The most savage beasts cannot endure the lightning flashing from his eyes, but shrinks away from his presence. Yet our beauty will soon fade.

The morning flowers display their sweets,
And gay their silken leaves unfold,
As careless of the noon-tide heats—
As fearless of the evening cold.

Nipt by the wind's untimely blast,
Parch'd by the sun's director ray,

The momentary glories waste,
The short-lived beauties die away.

So blooms the human face divine,
When youth its pride of beauty shows,
Fairer than spring the colors shine,
And sweeter than the virgin rose.

Or worn by slowly rolling years,
Or broke by sickness in a day,
The fading glory disappears,
The short-lived beauties die away.

Our bodies will become a mass of putrefaction, most disgusting to behold; but they shall be raised in glory. What this glory will be we cannot exactly tell, but the Apostle assures us, our bodies shall be fashioned like unto the glorious body of our blessed Lord. He made some faint display of his glory when he was transfigured in the presence of some of his disciples; and his garments became white and glistening as no fuller on earth can white them, and a flood of glory surrounded him. But he made the most grand display of his glory when he appeared to John on the Isle of Patmos. Says the Revelator—'I was in the spirit on the Lord's day, and heard a great voice behind me as of a trumpet, and I turned to see the voice, and, being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks, and in the midst of the candlesticks, one like unto the son of man, clothed with a garment down to the feet, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle. His head and his hair were white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire, and his feet were like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace, and his voice as the sound of many waters. And he had in his right hand seven stars, and out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength.' Such was the glory that shone from his countenance, that John could not endure the vision. Says he, 'I fell as one dead at his feet.'

The Apostle teaches us when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. Not that we shall equal him in the degree of our glory, but it will be the same in kind. Our glory will differ in degree, in proportion as we differ in holiness and usefulness in life. As one star differeth from another star in glory, so also shall it be in the resurrection. If we look above our heads in a clear winter evening, we shall see the heavens scattered over with innumerable stars, which like brilliant lamps hang suspended in the firmament. By the assistance of the magnifying power of the telescope, thousands more have been discovered. These are thought to be suns like our own, which are centres of systems, around which their planets revolve. There is a great difference in the apparent magnitude of these stars. While some of them appear

so small that they can now and then be discovered by a faint glimmering; others are of such magnitude, and shine with such lustre, that their glory is seen from pole to pole. Hence they have been distinguished into stars of the first, second, and third magnitudes, &c. Those of the first magnitude are such as appear the largest, and shine with the greatest splendor; the sixth magnitude are the smallest that can be discovered by the naked eye. Those of inferior magnitudes require the power of the telescope to discover them. Whether the apparent difference in the magnitude of these stars is owing to any real difference in their size, or the difference of their distances from us, cannot certainly be determined. As the stars appear of different magnitudes, and lustre, so shall it be in the resurrection. While some are so near the throne, and shine with such transcendent glory, that their light is seen through all the plains of heaven, others will be at a distance so remote, that amidst the flood of light by which they will be surrounded, they will be almost obscured. We are to observe, that although there is a great difference in the apparent magnitude and lustre of these stars, yet, they all appear glorious. So shall it be in the resurrection. We shall all be glorious. Every shape and every face shall be heavenly and divine.

3. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. In consequence of transgression, death, with all its concomitant evils, has been introduced into the world. Hence we are subject to weakness and decay. Behold that youth, the fire of his eye is extinguished; his once blooming countenance has faded, and his emaciated limbs are scarcely able to sustain the weight of his body. What does this teach us? It teaches us that some fatal disease is sapping the foundation of life. There is a man, his bones were brass, his flesh iron, and his nerves steel. The scorching rays of the summer's sun, and the chilling blasts of winter, were alike indifferent to him. But with what ease does a fit of common sickness pull him down. He pants, he groans, he dies. His body is sown in weakness. See the aged man, on whose head eighty winters have scattered their snows. He is trembling over the gaping tomb: one foot is already in the grave. By his multiplied infirmities, he sinks under the dominion of death. But he shall be raised in power; not only by the power of God but in the possession of immortal vigor. There will no more be a youth of a feeble constitution. There will no more be an old man, bending under the weight of three score years and ten—but immortal youth shall bloom on every countenance, and vigor shall string every nerve.

4. It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. A natural body is such as we receive in the ordinary course of nature. It needs the productions of the earth to sustain it. It is a prison to

the soul; and often proves a load to weigh down the spirits. But it shall be raised a spiritual body. By this we are not to understand that our bodies shall not be really corporeal; they will be as really corporeal as they now are. When our Lord, after his resurrection, made his appearance to his disciples, he said: 'Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself. Handle me and see me, for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have;' Luke xxiv. 29. Here he tells his disciples he has hands and feet, flesh and bones, which a spirit has not. He could not only be seen, but handled. Accordingly, he invited Thomas to reach hither his hand; and put his finger into the print of the nails, and thrust his hand into his side. This account can only be true of a body that is really material. With this body he ascended into heaven. If our bodies are like unto the glorious body of our Lord, they will be really corporeal. Although our bodies will be really corporeal, yet they will be purified and refined, and fitted up for heaven. They will no more stand in need of the productions of the earth, to sustain them, nor will the body any longer be a prison to the soul; but it will be nimble as lightning, and quick as thought. We shall be able to transport ourselves from world to world in the twinkling of an eye.

IV. How solemn, and how deeply interesting will be the circumstances attending the resurrection morning. The human family will be pursuing their ordinary occupations, when the archangel shall descend from heaven on the lightning's wing. He will set one foot on the land, and the other upon the sea; he will then lift his hand and swear by him that liveth forever and ever, that time shall be no longer. Then suddenly the wheels of nature will stop. The cataract will cease to thunder, and an awful pause will follow. Now the strong-lunged angel puts the trumpet to his mouth, and half concealed behind a cloud, blows a dreadful blast; it rolls and echoes, and dies away on distant hills. He blows again, the sun is blown out, the moon is turned to blood: the affrighted planets leave their orbits, and wander through regions of space; world dashes on world; planets are hurled from their orbits; the sea roars and the earth quakes to her profoundest centre. He blows again and the dead begin to rise. Yonder come the inhabitants, who have long slept beneath their monumental beds. There is Babylon, the glory of the Chaldean Kingdom, and the mistress of nations. Here is Pompeii and Herculaneum, that have long been buried beneath the eruptions of Vesuvius. There is Troy, the scene of classic song, where Priam reigned and Hector bled. Yonder comes Jerusalem, the city of the living God, where the holy temple stood, where the prophets dwelt, and where our Lord taught the people. See them gathering from the east, and from the west, from the north and from the south. O, my God! how the concourse swells and thickens

every moment. They crowd around thicker than the leaves of autumn—more numerous than the stars of heaven, or the sand upon the sea-shore. But who do I see yonder? There comes Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Here are the Apostles of the Lamb. O how they shine. There comes the army of Martyrs, that shed their blood and laid down their lives in testimony of the truth of the Gospel: now they are arrayed in immortal lustre. Lo, here come the Heralds of the Cross; they went forth weeping, bearing precious seed; but now they return rejoicing, bringing their sheaves with them. They shine like the sun in the firmament of heaven. But who is this great company—thousands of thousands, and ten times ten thousand, a company that no man can number? These are they that have come up through great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. But how different will be the resurrection of the unjust! They shall awake to the resurrection of damnation. Oh, their end! their dreadful end! The resurrection will be succeeded by the judgment, at which Jesus Christ shall appear, the Judge of the quick and the dead, and pronounce a just sentence on all mankind. The saints shall be welcomed to that kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world: but the unjust shall be sentenced to dwell with the Devil and his angels. Seeing we are all hastening to this eventful day, let us be wise, and make immediate preparations, that we may be always ready to give up our account with joy, and not with grief.

SERMON XXIV.

PARDON AND SANCTIFICATION OFFERED IN THE GOSPEL.

BY REV. TOBIAS SPICER,
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'If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.' 1 JOHN i. 9.

THERE were in the early days of Christianity, as there have been in every age since, 'some who deny the Lord that bought them.' Such believe they need no atoning sacrifice, no *sanctification* nor *pardon*, for they never have sinned. They begin with a determination to reject the gospel, and, that they may do it with a better grace, they deny their guilt and depravity. They say, we have never sinned, therefore we need no pardon, 'we have no sin,' i. e. moral pollution, and therefore we need no sanctification; we need no blood of atonement, no blood of sprinkling.

It is to such the apostle addressed himself in those words which precede the text.—'If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves.'—'If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar.' His meaning is, as though he had said, 'If we say, we need neither sanctification nor pardon, because we are neither guilty nor polluted, having never sinned,—we not only reject the gospel, but we deceive ourselves, and make God a liar; for God has said, 'All men have sinned.'

It is in this way, the words with which our text stands connected, are to be understood. They were never designed to intimate that a Christian may not be cleansed from all sin, and love the Lord with all his heart, any more than they are designed to prove that a *penitent* who confesseth and forsaketh, may not find mercy and pardon. Such a construction of these words would make the apostle contradict himself, and would be contrary to the most obvious meaning of our text. This declares, that if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

In considering the words of our text, we will *first* observe the

inestimable blessings offered us in the gospel, and *secondly* the condition on which these blessings are offered.

I. We consider the benefits which are offered us in the gospel.

The *first* thing here mentioned is, *forgiveness of sin*. When we consider the *nature* of sin and the circumstances under which it is often committed, especially when we consider against whom we have sinned, and the fearful consequences of sin; forgiveness will appear to be what it really is, an *inestimable* blessing. Our sins have been committed against our rightful sovereign to whom we are under infinite obligation. We have transgressed a law which is 'holy, just, and good.' We have sinned against the voice of reason, the dictates of an enlightened conscience, and the most express and explicit declaration of God's word. Our sins have aroused the Divine displeasure, and exposed us to everlasting ruin. The sentence of the Judge is already pronounced: Whoso believeth not is condemned already, the wrath of God abideth on him. Every impenitent sinner is on his way to the place of execution. The sinner is constantly 'treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgement of God.' God will most certainly render to those 'who do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, tribulation and anguish, indignation and wrath.' See Rom. ii. 8, 9. If all men have sinned, and if sin is indeed so offensive to God, and so destructive to the bodies and souls of men, surely that forgiveness which shall turn away his fierce anger from us, and restore us to his favor, is of the utmost importance.

Suppose a criminal convicted of a capital crime, and the judge by whom he is tried has pronounced his sentence. The day of his execution arrives, the instruments of death are made ready, and the officers of justice are leading him to meet his melancholy fate. Under these circumstances he feels himself to be on the confines of another world, just about to sink into the grave, loaded with guilt and shame. Now to a man under these circumstances, what favor could be so great as *forgiveness?* What news could be of so much importance to him as that which announces his *pardon?* Pardon would restore him to the favor of his prince and to the society of his friends. If you were to inform such an one that his worldly business is in great prosperity, that his wine and his oil are increased, such information would afford him but little comfort. Nay, it might make life appear more desirable, and thus only aggravate his wo. How natural it would be to sigh rather than rejoice, and to say, Ah, what availeth prosperity which mine eyes shall never behold? But could you assure such a man that his crimes are pardoned, and that he is restored to the favor of his prince; could you show him his pardon signed and sealed; you

would inspire his bosom with joy which nothing else could impart. Nothing beside is to him so important, and of so much value. Of such importance is forgiveness of sins, to one who has sinned against his God.

Forgiveness of sin is a *work done for us*, whereby God freely forgive thus all that is past, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Saviour. It is a work altogether distinct from any thing which we can do. It is absolutely necessary to our salvation. Amendment of life, even were it accompanied by the most heart-felt regret, or most painful sorrow, will not answer as a substitute for pardon. The man who has become indebted to a merchant to a large amount, may as well calculate to satisfy these claims, by informing his creditor that he is heartily sorry he has run in debt to such an amount, and that he will increase the debt no more. Such an acknowledgment, though accompanied with the deepest regret, would not satisfy the claims of the merchant; unless the debt be forgiven, justice will still have a claim.

That pardon, so necessary to our salvation, is freely offered us in the gospel, through the mediation of his dear Son; God can be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus.

2. Not only does the gospel offer *forgiveness* of sins to the penitent, but *sanctification* to the faithful believer. It declares that 'the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin.' Forgiveness is a work done *for* us, by it we are restored to the *divine favor;* but this cleansing 'from all unrighteousness' is a work done *in* us, by which we are restored to the *divine image*. The one is very properly called *justification*, and the other *sanctification*. As by the former we are brought into the favor of God, so by the latter we are prepared for the enjoyment of God. By this we are fitted for communion 'with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ' here, and are thereby prepared to enjoy eternal life hereafter. This is a work wrought in us by the Holy Spirit which is given unto us. This is the *new creation* of which the apostle speaks, effected by the power of God, 'which worketh in us mightily,' by which we are 'renewed in the spirit of our minds,' being 'created anew in Christ Jesus.'

And when this work is completed, we are enabled to love the Lord with all our heart, soul, might and strength, and 'perfect holiness in the fear of God.' Then shall we have 'the mind which was in Christ,' and be enabled to 'walk even as he walked.' This is that 'perfect love' which 'casteth out fear;' that evangelical 'perfection' of which our Saviour and his apostles so frequently speak;—this is that 'HOLINESS,' without which 'no man shall see the Lord.' Such as are *cleansed* 'from unrighteousness,' are enabled to overcome sin; sin shall have 'no dominion'

over them; they shall 'rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, and in every thing give thanks.'

Having briefly noticed the unspeakable benefits offered us in the gospel, we proceed,

II. To notice the condition on which these benefits are offered, which is '*confession of our sins.*'

1. This confession of our sins does not mean merely that we confess to the world in some general way that we have sinned. Many are very ready to admit that all men are sinners, and of course they as well as others. But they do it with perfect indifference. Indeed, many plead the doctrine of human depravity rather as an apology for their wickedness than for any other purpose. And some will even confess their evil deeds as a matter of self-gratulation; such may be said to 'glory in their shame.' This kind of confession is not that which is contemplated in our text.

2. The confession which the gospel requires, is not what is called *auricular* confession. Such a confession the Romish church, requires. She requires this not only as a duty, but she seems to regard it as a sacrament. Such a confession of our sins is unnecessary and unscriptural; for, 1st. There is no proof that the power of remitting sins was ever imparted to any beside the apostles; or at the most to those to whom the discernment of spirits was communicated. And 2dly. If our Saviour had designed this kind of confession as a duty, he would have expressly commanded it. But as no such command is given, we insist that no such duty is required, nor is such confession acceptable to God. It is among the works of supererogation.

If we have wronged any man, or defrauded any man, it is right and proper that we confess our faults to those we have injured, and perhaps it may sometimes be proper to confess these faults to the world. Justice would require this at our hands. The apostle says, 'confess your faults one to another.' And there may be cases wherein men under the guilt and trouble of their sins, cannot appease their own minds, nor direct themselves without recourse to some pious and prudent guide. In such cases they would do well to discover their condition to some pious minister or judicious friend, whose advice and prayers may be of great assistance to them. But our confession of sin must be before God, if from God we expect pardon.

3. Nor does the confession contemplated in the text, merely mean that we acknowledge our sinfulness in our religious creed. This we may do and yet have no lively sensibility respecting it. We may talk of it as a doctrine revealed in the Bible, and as a matter of mere speculation, without any real heart-felt conviction of its evil nature, or destructive tendency. A man may confess

this truth, without one spark of that 'godly sorrow that worketh repentance.'

We may go even farther than to acknowledge our sinfulness in our creed; we may carry this truth on our lips into the sanctuary of the Lord; it may constitute a part of our form of prayer, which we may use in the solemn assembly of the saints. And the expression, Lord, be merciful to us *miserable sinners*, may fall from our lips with great emphasis. And while we thus draw nigh to God with right words on our lips, our hearts may be from him; we may still remain strangers to that *confession* required in the gospel.

That confession of sin which is required in the gospel, and which constitutes the condition on which the forgiveness of our sins is promised, is, 1st. A confession which arises from a sense of guilt; —from a conviction of having *sinned against God*;—of having abused his *goodness*, insulted his *holiness*, defied his power, and, consequently, having exposed ourselves to his infinite displeasure. 2d. This confession is followed by *reformation*. Whoever feels himself a sinner, and sincerely confesses his sin before God, will be very careful in future to forsake and avoid sinning. And this is what the gospel requires of every sinner. 'Let the wicked forsake his ways, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return to the Lord.'—Let him 'break off his sins by righteousness;'—Let him 'ask of God;'—And the promise saith, 'The Lord will have mercy on him, and God will abundantly pardon.' —'He giveth unto all men (that thus ask of him) *liberally*, and upbraideth not,'—'It shall be given him.' And 3d, the confession which the gospel requires, implies still more. It embraces FAITH. 1st. Faith in God, and 2d. Faith in his Son Jesus Christ. The Scriptures declare, that 'whoso cometh unto God, (for pardon) must believe that he is, and that he is the rewarder of those who diligently seek him.' They must trust in his *truth* and *power*. This is faith in God. And our blessed Lord saith, 'Ye believe in God, believe also in me.' The gospel requires of all to whom it is preached 'a hearty concurrence of the will and affections, with the plan of salvation by Jesus Christ, a renunciation of every other refuge; an actual trust in the Saviour, and a personal apprehension of his merits.' This is the faith that 'confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh.' This is the faith by which a sinner comes to Christ, and by which he is justified. And 'being justified by faith, he has peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.' This is agreeable to God's gracious promise, that 'whoso *confesseth* and forsaketh his sin shall have mercy.'

Thus is the condition of our salvation set forth in the Holy Scriptures, and the apostle assures us in our text, that God is *just* and *faithful* to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all un-

righteousness. 1st. He is *just*;—Having given his Son to be the propitiation for our sins, who by the 'sacrifice of himself' for us, answered the demands of the divine law, and thereby having magnified it, and made it honorable, he can now pardon the guilty who 'believe in Jesus,' and yet remain *just*. To use the language of the apostle, 'he can be just, and yet the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus.' If a judge were to acquit the guilty, without any satisfaction being made, he would be an unjust judge, and would greatly dishonor the law. So if God were to let the guilty go free without any regard to the demands of his law, or the claims of infinite justice, we cannot see how he could be just. But as the matter now stands, he can be just although he should acquit the guilty. 'Not imputing our trespasses unto us,' but 'pardoning iniquity, transgression and sin.' He is *just* to *forgive* us our sins.

But 2nd. He is not only *just* to forgive, but he is also '*faithful*.' He is faithful to fulfil his promises. He has graciously promised to pardon the penitent that confesseth and forsaketh his sins, and believeth in Jesus;—to sanctify and bless the humble believer, that 'cometh out from the world,' who neither touches, tastes nor handles the unclean thing;' but 'follows on to know the Lord:'—He is *faithful* and will do it. He will sprinkle us with clean water, and from all our filthiness and from all our idols he will cleanse us; a new heart will he give unto us, and he will renew a 'a right spirit within us.'

These are the unspeakable benefits and glorious privileges, which are offered us in the gospel, and these are the great and precious promises given unto us. And we have seen that the condition on which all these promises will be fulfilled, and all these blessings enjoyed, is, that we confess and forsake our sins, and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ:—that we deny ourselves, take up our cross and follow Christ. Then shall we be his disciples, then shall we walk in the gracious light of his countenance here, and dwell in his glorious presence forever hereafter. There we who have been pardoned and cleansed from all unrighteousness, shall unite to sing 'unto him that loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood;'—to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

SERMON XXV.

MISSIONARY SERMON.

BY REV. W. HANNAH,
DELIVERED IN LAMBETH STREET CHURCH, LONDON, APRIL 26, 1833.

'I will be as the dew unto Israel: he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon. They that dwell under his shadow shall return; they shall revive as the corn, and grow as the vine: the scent thereof shall be as the wine of Lebanon.' HOSEA xiv. 5, 7.

THE history of God's conduct towards his ancient people supplies perpetual evidence that, in his administration, mercy rejoices over judgment. He severely reproves their manifold iniquities, denounces approaching chastisements, and sometimes inflicts them amidst circumstances of peculiar aggravation; and yet it is easy for you to learn, throughout this system of Providence, that his purpose is to recover—not to reject, but to bring back—not to destroy, but to save. "How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? How shall I deliver thee, Israel? How shall I make thee as Admah? How shall I set thee as Zeboim? Mine heart is turned within me; my repentings are kindled together." Such is the language of God when he is lifting up his hand—when he is just upon the point of smiting his rebellious people with a curse. And it is very remarkable, that at such seasons the strongest expressions of his compassion are sometimes found: it seems as if preceding threatenings enhanced and raised subsequent promise—as if mercy, escaping from the task of justice, rejoices to pour forth its own free and neglected offers.

Be it remembered that the Scripture is a book of principles, and not a mere record of facts. In the facts which it presents to our consideration, it embodies the everlasting principles of God's dominion. It holds up a deep and faithful mirror, in which we may behold the portraiture of all his proceedings; and while we are marking his conduct towards the ancient Israel, still we are observing how he hastens from the chastisement of justice to the promises of mercy. We have reason to take courage, and to triumph in the thought, that justice is tempered

by mercy, and that our heavenly Father, the ruler of our spiritual Israel, rejoices to save—not to destroy.

The book of the prophet Hosea offers a very striking exemplification of the remarks thus generally made. Hosea seems to have flourished about the time of Isaiah, and to have been more especially, though not exclusively, commissioned to the ten tribes of Israel. These tribes were at that time in a state of great defection from the God of their fathers: this prophet had, therefore, to bear the burden of the Lord—to publish reproofs and threatenings. He did so with a tone of peculiar severity: there is, to appearance, an amazing harshness, occasionally, in Hosea; it seems as if he could scarcely find language sufficiently bold, or description sufficiently forcible, to convey those sentiments of reproof which he was commissioned to utter. Yet in the midst of all this, you find, that his most severe predictions are interspersed with offers and promises of mercy. You find that, towards the conclusion of his threatenings, he seems to have abandoned the wind, the earthquake, and the fire—to resign all that was more severe in his message, and to confine himself unreservedly to this declaration of love, of which our text is a specimen. The text may be properly regarded as one of those comprehensive passages of Holy Scripture, which were intended for the instruction and benefit of the Church in all its circumstances and generations, a passage applicable to the spiritual as well as to the natural Israel —a passage which derives great emphasis from the circumstance, that it occurs in the writings of the prophet who was commissioned especially to reprove. He leaves his thunders for these invitations of compassion, leaves all that was harsh and severe, that he may, in the name of God, pour himself forth in language such as this.

I cannot think that it will be unsuitable to us to examine this passage, on the present occasion, in reference to that great work which lies before us. And I would not lose sight of the connection of the passage here; for it has pleased our heavenly Father to correct and chasten us in numerous ways. The bolt has been suspended, and it has fallen: we have occasion to mourn at this anniversary, more than at any other former one, over the ravages which God's providence has been pleased to make among us: we have reason to consider that the Most High has some chastisement still to inflict; that, at all events, he especially calls upon us to "hear the rod, and Him that hath appointed it," to acknowledge his hand, and to betake ourselves to his mercy. We would do so according to the plan which he himself has suggested. He prepares the way for mercy by the denunciation of justice; and we, amid the visitations of chastise-

ment, would fall into his outstretched arms, and would feel that the God who smites us is a God of love, the fountain of all blessings to his Israel.

Our text represents three things: first, the influence which God promises to his church; secondly, the prosperity which his church shall enjoy in consequence of that influence; and thirdly, the subsequent extension of the church in the world around it.

Let us observe, *first*, THAT SPIRITUAL INFLUENCE WHICH ALMIGHTY GOD HERE PROMISES TO HIS CHURCH. "I will be as the dew unto Israel,"—a metaphor drawn from the oriental dews, which in many respects were remarkable, and which presented to the minds of the people in that country a very forcible view of that influence which was thus suggested.

It is, in the first place, *a copious influence*. Oriental dews abound during the dry season, often supplying the place of rain, penetrating the sources of vegetable life, and being pre-eminently remarkable for copiousness and plenteousness—a circumstance of the utmost importance to the prosperity of those countries, and exceedingly adapted, therefore, for the expression of this promise. We find such a figure as this employed to represent Divine influence, and to fix the attention on that abundance. To us the dew becomes significant and very inviting; for we know that one of the principal features attending the influence which our Saviour bestows, is its abundance. The Spirit promised in times past to the fathers has placed the kingdom of heaven amongst men. The testimonies which are given concerning him, the hopes which are inspired, all lead us to fix our minds on this more plentiful communication, which shall fill our capacities, satisfy our desires, and make the wilderness a fruitful field. When you are surrounded by the ravages of mortality, and are concerning yourselves for the work of your God, remember that if he send forth his influence so copiously and plentifully, it will abundantly supply every want, and the living dew upon Israel shall give it increasing life.

It is, in the next place, *a refreshing and renovating influence* which is promised here. The dews, descending abundantly on those eastern countries, reached the very sources of vegetable life, spread a new balm and beauty over the whole scene, caused all things to revive and to flourish in new vigor. We are reminded of "times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord," —an expression which, in our own day, particularly suggests this as something which shall refresh, strengthen, and invigorate that which is thirsty and faint. There you look for the influences which God has promised to bestow. They are not only copious enough to fill all your capacities, but are so refreshing as to change

your own spiritual state, and give beauty and glow and glory to that which before was desert. The Spirit of God refreshes the thirsty mind of man by the communication of his truth, the thirsty conscience of man by the bestowment of his mercy, and the whole nature of man by that abundant grace which he sheds abroad, and by means of which he raises and satisfies and saves. I see, then, from this promise of God, not only what is sufficiently large, but what is most suitable—sufficiently large to satisfy all my desires, and suitable as the dew which descends upon the thirsty ground, and which is so fitted to refresh and renovate the whole.

It is, in the third place, *a fertilizing influence* which God promises here. The design of all dew is to promote a greater measure of fertility. It is encouraging to know that all the influence which God bestows, leads to the production of a spiritual and practical effort more eminently to advance the diffusion of his glory. If the Spirit descend copiously from on high, it is that converts may "spring up as among the grass, as willows by the water courses." If the Spirit descend, the wilderness becomes a fruitful field, and the fruitful field is counted for a forest. All things flourish in new life and in new fruitfulness. The man thus plentifully supplied from his God, is "neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ."

I once more remark, that such an influence is *silent and instantaneous, yet most mighty in its operations*. We seem to fall into the error which marked the conduct of the people in the days of the Lord—we expect that the kingdom of God will come with observation, with something which shall attract human regard, something striking, something instantaneous, something which moves with noise, as well as searches and renovates by power: we cannot entirely shake off these prejudices. We should at all times so let God work in the manner in which it pleases him to work. If he should think proper to employ means more mighty, more visible, more striking in the sight of men, let him do so: but at the same time never let us forget that his usual order of proceeding is in a more silent, but not less powerful manner. He becomes as the dew unto Israel: his influence descends with all its abundance, its refreshing qualities, and its fertilizing effects; but it descends in silence, it descends on the waiting spirit, it descends that it may more evidently appear that the power is of God, and not of us—a power which silently searches and renews the whole man. Silence is the energy of God. Look around you at this season of the year. A short time since, all was the dreariness and desolation of winter: a mighty change is now transpiring all around us; every thing begins to

wear the hue of beauty, and proving a mighty change in the vegetable world. What has accomplished it? Has there been aught very noisy, aught very instantaneous, aught to strike men's senses, or to attract especial observation? Nothing of the kind: God has sent forth his own silent and pervading influence: he has penetrated the veil, he has changed the whole scene by his own silent energy; and he has given new life, and new beauty, and new glory. And may we not justly expect that he will proceed in the same way to pour out his influence on his Church? He works when we regard it not: he is sending forth the silent dew of his influence; it is penetrating the earth; removing the dreariness of winter, and spreading new scenes around us, when perhaps we suppose that nothing but what is ordinary is transpiring.

There is, doubtless, a mistake here. We expect that God will become as dew unto Israel: we expect the effusion of divine influence, which shall renovate the church and the earth too. It is of the utmost consequence that this expectation be kept alive; but are we not expecting it, as if nothing of the kind had not already taken place—as if there would be an effusion of Divine influence marked in all its parts and characters, by something irregular, and new, and strange? The Spirit is descending: go abroad into the different sections of this country, mark that more serious attention, that deeper sense of spiritual things, that more marked growth in Divine life, among the different denominations in this and other lands, and you will see what is the commencement of that living influence which is diffused in all the world—the change of the season of winter into the glow and glory of spring.

Brethren, we are acting most consistently, then, with the order of our God, when we are attending to these secret and spiritual renovations of his grace—when we are striving amongst his people, and amongst those who associate with his people, to promote such an influence as this: not disregarding it because it is not surrounded with pomp and noise, but rejoicing in that dew which he diffuses, and earnestly waiting until the mighty flood should flow down, until the mighty shower descend, and the whole scene is renovated. May we seek this influence upon ourselves and all around us! May we not, then, expect his promise, and that all shall yet be well? He will be as the dew unto Israel. Be Thou as the dew unto us! Let thy copious, refreshing, fertilizing, powerful influence, descend, secret as the silent dew, and give new glory to every part of our Church! and then, though thy servants die, the work of our God shall live and flourish.

The *second* part of this subject, which this text presents to our

notice, has respect to THE PROSPERITY WHICH THE CHURCH SHALL ENJOY IN CONSEQUENCE OF THIS INFLUENCE. And here the Prophet, alluding to a tree, has drawn a beautiful representation of that sort of prosperity which we ought most earnestly to covet.

There is, for example, *the fair promise of future fruit.* "I will be as the dew unto Israel"—more literally, "I will be as the blossom—as the lily"—as a tree refreshed by the influence of spring: he shall put forth new blossoms, like the lily, so fair, so lovely: he shall yield promise of most encouraging and renovated life, and more abundant fertility. Persons who are accustomed to God's spiritual operations have often seen, that when his influence is descending like the dew, it has often produced this effect on the Church itself, in its general connections, or in its more particular sections. There has been the appearance of the fair blossoms—serious thought, earnest inquiry, fervent prayer: it appears as if the tree were clothing itself in new blossoms, giving tokens of new life, as if it were pledging the certainty of more abundant harvest.

But *a growing stability in the life of God is a second part of this prosperity.* "He shall cast forth"—he shall strike—"his roots as Lebanon." The allusion is to the cedars of Lebanon, remarkable for striking their roots deep, rising to an eminent height, becoming a monument of permanence and strength. If the Prophet had mentioned the blossom merely, it might be thought he might have mentioned what was very pleasing and very fair: but he passes to the growing stability of it: that Church, thus flourishing in its new blossoms, shall, at the same time, strike deep its roots, take further hold of the soul, shall be more entirely rooted in "the truth as it is in Jesus."

Our Apostle suggests, that the three constraining principles of the Christian, are faith, hope, and love: and we may truly say, that the Christian has an exceeding stability here, in the faith which believes, in the hope which expects, and in the love which enjoys. We sometimes hear of revivals, when men are said to be brought to the knowledge of the truth, but in which there often seems to be scarcely any increase of stability among its professors. I will not say that such revivals are to be utterly disregarded; but I may say, it would be seen better if they had a genuine piety appropriate to an increase of life in the Church itself. That is God's usual order of proceeding: while blossoms are putting forth and roots are striking deep, there is a greater stability—a more entire establishment, in all the principles and blessings of the Divine nature.

An enlargement of existing members of the Church in divine

grace, is a third proof of this prosperity. "His branches shall spread"—his branches shall go forward, increasing in size, becoming more capable of leaf, and of fruit too. I cannot think that this applies to the accession of new members so much as to the enlargement of members already existing—their growth in the spiritual life. We sometimes love to select for contemplation, seasons when Christians have attained, by the power of God, a more eminent degree of divine grace, when we may see them rising into their proper magnitude, conveying to us the lovely representation of what Christian men ought to be. Where do we find abundance of such examples? Where and when? In those places and at those seasons in which God especially pours forth his Spirit. It is then that the branches of his own tree go forward: it is then we mark their growth, their vitality, their fruitfulness: it is then we have the greatest number of the choicest and most precious examples of the power and energy of the Divine life. Amidst the influence which God pours forth, the Christian man rises to his promised stature, and becomes in some measure what we are all invited to become, when we rise to the high standard which God has placed before us—the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.

Another mark of this prosperity discovers itself in *the Church's spirituality*. "His beauty shall be as the olive tree, and his smell as Lebanon." When we speak of the fruits of Christian piety, we may not improperly distribute them into three classes: fruits of special devotedness to God—fruits of personal purity and circumspection—and fruits of practical charity, fruits of doing good to others. These fruits abound amidst the influence of God, when he pours forth the dew of his blessing. You find that all these parts of Christian felicity are wonderfully associated together; they seem inseparable, as they truly are. The man gives himself to God, to the pursuit and practice of all holiness, and gives himself up to the warm fervors of a warm charity—feels himself constrained by the love of Christ—constrained to become "steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord"—then especially knowing, when the influence of God is with him, that his "labor is not in vain in the Lord."

I mention only another mark of this prosperity, that is, the *healing influence which a prosperous Church diffuses*, thus blooming, and taking new root, and enlarging his branches, and sustaining new fruit. The description closes with saying, "His smell shall be as Lebanon;" the fragrant influence shall spread himself from him as from the odoriferous plants and shrubs on Mount Lebanon. There shall be something inviting and healing in that influence which this prosperous Church possesses. How

fragrant is the influence of holy tempers when all the man's dispositions are involved with the influence he has received from on high! How fragrant are holy words, when a person's conversation is with grace and abundantly filled with that holy unction which descended from heaven! How fragrant are holy actions! The same actions done by another person are not the same—the vital blossoms, the living unction, are wanting: performed by the man who feels the influence from on high, they diffuse their own odor; they convey an evidence which cannot be resisted, that they are wrought of God. Happy the Church when thus favored with the dew of God's blessing—it diffuses such an influence all around! Why should not this be the case more and more? The dew of God's blessing is promised, and prosperity will assuredly follow; if we secure the influence we shall have the prosperity; and the tree, before rent, and torn, and despised, and forsaken, shall flourish under the care of God, and shall exhibit every mark of true prosperity.

It follows, *thirdly*, that THERE SHALL BE AN EXTENSION OF THE CHURCH.

First, *by the accession of new members*; "They that dwell under his shadow shall return,"—an expression somewhat ambiguous of meaning. The fact doubtless is, that many shall turn from their manifold wandering to dwell under the shadow of this prosperous Church.

The Prophet may have three classes of persons on his mind—at least we may apply the expression to three classes. The *first* constitutes the apostates from the truth. At the time Hosea wrote, there were many of these who forsook the Church, and betook themselves to their own apostate wanderings; but he knew that if God became as the dew unto Israel, and if Israel should flourish under his blessing, many of these would return to dwell under his shadow.

The *second* class may comprehend those who are indifferent and careless. While the Church is neglected, these persons lay disregarded. The glory of God's Church is his own presence. If you imagine that aught else will engage man's true attention, you are mistaken. You may increase its worldly influence, its worldly splendor, but you increase not its success. Its efficacy flows directly from God; and when the spiritual life languishes, the Church loses its influence, and is disregarded by careless and indifferent persons. They look at the naked trunk of this Church, withered and desolate, and they go on, finding no shelter, no invitation there. But let the Church flourish and revive, and these indifferent and careless ones shall return and dwell under its shadow.

The *third* class embraces the distant pagans, whom the prophets seem more especially to have had in view. These neglect the Church of the living God when it is destitute of his blessing; but when it flourishes, then they, of every class and every name, are ready to return to dwell under its shadow and the blessing of its protection. You have reason to expect this will be the case if God shall prosper us by his own presence. We look around, and are sometimes discouraged; apostates are blaspheming, indifferent persons are freezing in their own carelessness, and the wicked world in pagan darkness seems to remain unbroken. We begin to calculate; we think how many ages must pass away ere this scene shall change. It changes in a moment, when it is touched by the power of God. Let him descend, let the Church have true prosperity, and others of every class—apostates, careless ones, pagans of every condition and every degree of sinful and spiritual malignity—shall be ready to return, and to place themselves under the shadow of the Church, and to partake of its benefits. It was so when the Spirit first descended; it is so now, whenever the Spirit more especially descends, and it shall be so to the end of the world; that the prosperity of the Church, flowing from God's blessing, shall prove itself too by the extension of its influence unto the careless world around.

There shall be an increase of life in these new members of the Church:—"They shall revive as the corn." New life is given to them. At first they appear naked and unpromising as the corn; they decayed and died like that corn; but, by the blessing of the God of Grace as well as the God of Providence, they revive, they live again as that corn, and, in connection with the living Church, they possess its living influence. "They shall grow as the vine"—another Scripture emblem of fertility—reviving in newness of life; they shall yield divine fruit, fruit correspondent to that of the true Church of God; they shall flourish yet more and more in all that shall bring glory to God and benefit to man.

Once more. *They shall present an acceptable memorial to the God whom they have chosen.* "And the scent thereof shall be as Lebanon;" or rather, "The memorial thereof shall be as the wine of Lebanon," used in libation, poured forth as an acceptable offering upon the altar of God. These converts to the flourishing Church, growing in number and abounding in spiritual life, shall bring their offering as a memorial, and pour it forth on the altar. It shall be a memorial of themselves, presented as a libation to God; it shall be a memorial of their service, yielded without reserve to Him who has called them to glory and to virtue; it shall be the memorial of their gifts—they yield to him

what they have as well as what they are; and each new memorial, poured forth on the altar of God, shall come up with acceptance in his sight. His dew gave the prosperity, which, spreading itself into this extension of blessings and hopes, shall be presented again back to God, holy and acceptable in his sight.

It is important that we learn from such a subject as this, in the first place, *to repose our entire trust in God for the prosperity of the Church.* It is only when he becomes as the dew unto Israel that Israel prospers. Paul may plant, and Apollos may water, but God alone can give the increase. At the present season it seems necessary, more than usually necessary, to call general attention to this great point. We form our plans, we employ our efforts; but let us depend on God. "Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils; for wherein is he to be accounted of?" We had our standard-bearers—they seemed especially set for the work to which they were called: we almost felt as if the work, in a great measure, depended on them; we marked their genius, their attainments, their zeal, their fitness for this great work: we sometimes thought, perhaps, that they were the men to carry on this work of God, and spread the dew of his blessing on all nations. The standard-bearers have fled, and now their lifeless hands are lifted no more. We perceive, in the mortality which has taken place amongst us, that God has especially smitten those men on whom our hopes depended; that if the work depended on man, faithful as he might be, his mortality causes him to fall, and, at the very moment when he expected to extend his labors, he will himself sink in death, and leave his work, as well as its blessing, to others. But our heavenly Father lives—the word of the Lord endureth forever. Man may pass away—man, living perpetually amidst dangers and vicissitudes; but God, the fountain of our dew, ever reigns, and he will bestow upon us his blessing. Let us not lean upon man, let us not lean upon any creature; but let us place our hope and trust in God: he will be as the dew unto Israel, he will shed abroad an influence such as Israel most needs. I exhort and beseech you, my brethren, if you desire that God's work should prosper—if you long for the time when all the world shall be God's, invigorated by his life and covered by his influence—if you seek the success of all Christian missionary efforts—I beseech you, among all your exertions, to remember prayer to God. Let the voice of prayer ascend; let us acknowledge that all springs from Him; while, thankful for the instrumentality he may employ, let us still centre all our hopes of success in united and fervent prayer, that the dew of his blessing may more copiously descend and afford the prosperity he has promised.

It is important that we remark, in the second place, *that the usual order of God's proceeding, when he pours forth his blessings, is, to give increased grace to his Church.* I advert to this, because it is important that I mention it now for a practical purpose. My brethren, we assemble together on these occasions, in town and in country, with the avowed design of promoting the work of God on the earth: we look for this, we aim at this. But let us beseech God to carry on the work in his own appointed way. What does the revival of religion properly mean? Unquestionably it properly and strictly means something which re-lives in the Church: the withered and parched field revives, lives again, when it is visited with the plentiful shower; long languishing and decaying, it lives again, when the right appliances are used. When we are speaking of revivals, the very word conveys the idea of life already existing in a low and languishing state, which must be revived, resuscitated, raised, invigorated. And the very word itself is used to mark, more especially, the Divine agency itself in the work. The Church itself must revive, live again, and prosperity must begin in God's Israel: the dew falls there, but blessing does not stay there. It is of the utmost consequence, that in every place we seek the revival of God's work in those in whom it is already begun, in order to its extension to the world around us.

I call on you, my brethren, to do this as societies, as members of societies, as persons concerned in the general prosperity of God's work. When you especially begin to seek the prosperity of the work in the right way, you desire to spread the truth, you long for the Pentecostal effusions of the Holy Spirit, and seek them for yourselves. If every professing Christian in this land were filled with the Holy Ghost, if the dew of God's blessing rested on him, there would soon be an astonishing extension of the work. The light thus kindled would spread; the influence thus poured forth would diffuse itself on every side; the leaven would exert its influence till the whole were leavened. The great duty of the Christian Church, in reference to God, is to offer up fervent and believing prayers to him in reference to the Church, in reference to its practical influence, and to receive and cherish a large measure of influence from God.

Brethren, suffer this word of exhortation. I have never yet known an extension of God's work which did not begin in his own Church. Mercy, as well as judgment, begins at the house of God. We are pre-eminently required now to pray that God would pour out blessings on ourselves—that he would give us every token of prosperity—that the blossoms may appear, the stability increase, the members enlarge, the fruit abound to the

praise and glory of God. Let it be so, and we shall be blessed and be prepared to be blessings to others.

In conclusion, *let us learn to cherish the confident hope, that God, even our own God, will not forsake us.* Many difficulties seem to lie in the way, but if we have the desire of his blessing, and if we flourish in the prosperity that that dew gives, we shall have the text verified delightfully; men shall revive, "they shall revive as the corn, they shall grow as the vine;" they shall present the memorial as the wine of Lebanon. We may look East and West, and North and South—no human effort is able to withstand Him who is God. Let a Christian man go forth, not in his own weakness, but relying on God's power—let him go forth filled with the spirit of prayer, and faith, and zeal—let him go forth testifying his Lord and Saviour with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, and we care not what class of people he may visit—be they ever so degraded, they shall be raised—be they ever so barbarous, they shall be renewed—be they ever so prejudiced, they shall be conquered—be they ever so alienated, they shall be restored. Let us go forward trusting in God; let us trust in his blessing, and we shall find that Barbarian, Scythian, bond and free—every country and people and tongue shall be ready to yield to an influence so especially proceeding from God—shall turn to a flourishing Church, and present the Christian memorial on their altar; and the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ shall bring salvation to all. Let us go forth animated by his Spirit, and lift up that cross amidst the darkness of this world: it shall give light in the darkness; and by that cross you shall conquer. Let us go forth rejoicing in Jesus Christ and in him crucified, laying our foundation in his truth, and carrying on our work in reliance on his mercy. The world shall not stand against us, but the cause of our Lord and Saviour shall still spread and diffuse itself, until the promise given to the Church shall be abundantly fulfilled and the Church recovered and glorified. The word of the Lord shall have free course, shall mightily prevail, until a memorial from all nations shall be presented as an offering to our Lord and Saviour. May God hasten that time—may he carry on his work in every society, displaying his influence, and carrying on his work in the world by extending the fruits of that influence, until all shall know him, from the least unto the greatest! Amen.

SERMON XXVI.

ON CHRISTIAN PERFECTION.

BY REV. JOHN LOMAS.

DELIVERED AT MOUNT-PLEASANT CHAPEL, LIVERPOOL, (AS APPOINTED BY CONFERENCE,) ON TUESDAY EVENING, JULY 31, 1832.

'Therefore, leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection.' HEBREWS, vi. 1.

THE Apostle, in this chapter, exposes the danger of apostasy, and guards against it. A desire after perpetual progress is one of the most effectual antidotes to a spirit of declension; and St. Paul, having established the verity of the Christian system, and thus laid a safe foundation for practical admonitions, exhorts the Hebrew converts, in the words of the text, to diligence in seeking after a perfect acquaintance with the whole Christian scheme. Without any formal introduction to the passage before us, I shall endeavor, first, to explain, and, secondly, to enforce the exhortation of the text.

First: WHAT ARE "THE PRINCIPLES OF THE DOCTRINE OF CHRIST," AND IN WHAT SENSE ARE THEY TO BE LEFT? HOW AND WHY SHOULD WE LEAVE THEM, AND GO ON UNTO PERFECTION? "The principles of the doctrine of Christ" are those elementary truths which lie at the foundation of Christian experience and Christian practice. Paul specifies the chief of these in the verses which follow the text—the duty and necessity of repentance enforced by the solemnity and certainty of the judgment to come; the necessity of the Holy Spirit's influences, and of his reception by all Christian believers; with the joys produced by a sense of pardon, and the hope of future glory. These truths St. Paul denominates, "the principles of the doctrine of Christ," because they constitute the fundamental parts of the Christian system: they are, so to speak, the alphabet of Christian doctrine. Now, these "principles" are not to be left, in any sense of the term, *till they are thoroughly understood.* To leave principles before they are thoroughly mastered, is to expose ourselves to constant error in our future prayers. Every person who has been em-

ployed in public instruction knows that false or inadequate notions of first principles propagate themselves and produce multiplied errors in all subsequent steps of our progress. In communicating a knowledge of any system, you first require that the elements should be mastered. You will never introduce a pupil into the art of spelling before the alphabet was acquired: this step is essential to future attainments. So, in mathematical science, certain axioms, admitted to be true, must first be mastered, before the application of them to the demonstration of more abstruse and complex propositions can ever be admitted.

Many mistakes, with regard to the nature of experimental religion, would be avoided, if men would only adopt the same maxims in the study of religion which they admit to be important in all other studies, and if men did not presume to decide, to dogmatize upon the matters of experimental religion, and to sound its depths, before they had put themselves into possession of the line which should fathom them. It is an important part, therefore, of the duty of every public teacher, frequently to inculcate "the principles of the doctrine of Christ," and to insist upon them often and with great emphasis, especially in the case of those who, "ever learning, are never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." Ignorance of these principles sometimes reflects discredit upon the teacher, and always reflects disgrace upon the pupil. Till first principles, then, are mastered, they are not, in any sense, to be left. A principle is mastered when satisfactory evidence is possessed by the person. Truth has its own kind of evidence. With regard to truth which may be submitted to the test of experience, we have satisfactory evidence of it when we feel its experimental effects: he understands the doctrine of repentance who has felt its sorrows—he understands the doctrine of pardon who has tasted the peace which flows from it—he knows the principles of the gospel, with regard to the influence of the Spirit, who has been "sealed" by that Spirit, as a Spirit of adoption, and who has "the witness in himself." Now, when principles are mastered by a knowledge of their experimental results, then we are to "leave" them.

But, again, as principles are not to be left, in any sense, till they are thoroughly understood, so *neither are they to be abandoned.* To abandon principles is to apostatize fatally. This appears to constitute the character and danger of those numerous professors, whose condition St. Paul describes, in such vivid language, in the verses that follow the text. They, it appears, had reached a state of hopeless and irrecoverable apostasy—how? by renouncing first principles. How is a man to be recovered from speculative or practical error? You must attempt his recovery,

by making your appeal to some truth which he yet admits; but suppose he admits none—suppose he has renounced the whole body of Christian truth, and you and he have no one religious principle in common—how is the recovery of such a man to accuracy of thought, or propriety of conduct, to be effected? The thing is practically impossible. First principles, then, are not to be renounced. When St. Paul, therefore, exhorts us to "leave" them, it is of course implied that these principles are to be left for the purpose of applying them to subsequent discoveries and attainments in religion. Principles are to be left as the alphabet of a language is left when the pupil proceeds to put letters together—principles are to be left as the axioms of a science are left, when understood, for the purpose of making application of them to larger propositions—principles are to be left, as a conquered country, which has fallen into the hands of a successful general, is left, after he has garrisoned it with his own troops, that he may bring under his dominion that portion of the enemy's territory which yet stands out against his arms.

In this sense, principles are to be left; and we oppose this part of the exhortation of the text to errors which it appears to provide against. First, we oppose the spirit and maxim of the text to the error of those who are continually suffering their faith in first principles to be shaken—men who indulge a doubtful and sceptical temper—who know not when to be satisfied with evidence—who are constantly examining questions touching the principles of religion, as though they never had been settled, and as though they never were to be settled. The conduct of such persons St. Paul describes as resembling the conduct of a man, who, after having laid with care the foundation of his building, should be perpetually removing the stones that constituted it, distrusting the stability of the ground beneath. Why, a man should take care that the ground on which his foundation stands is good—that is to be his first business; but after he has satisfied himself, by careful inspection, that he has good ground to rest upon, and his foundation is once laid, of course it ought to be laid once for all. Now, with regard to the leading truths of religion, and our personal interest in them, no man, as I have said just now, should satisfy himself till he has sufficient warrant for his faith, and scriptural reason for concluding himself to be an accepted child of God; but after he has satisfied himself on that point, he is to take the matter for granted, and not to be perpetually and doubtfully asking for fresh evidence in order to make that clear which has already been established to his own satisfaction—he is not to be perpetually calling up again from their graves the ghosts of objections which have repeatedly been exorcised by the light and

power of truth—he is not to be continually beginning anew the great work of religious inquiry, as though doubt were always to hang on this important subject. To indulge a temper of this kind is to foster the unbelief of our hearts—it is to create a sceptical spirit—it is to expose ourselves to every wind of doctrine—it is to invite the assaults of temptation—it is effectually to debar ourselves from all progress in religion.

Principles are to be left, and we oppose the maxim of the text, secondly, to the conduct, to the indolence of those who regard principles as though they constituted the whole of religion. There are some, it is to be feared, of this character. They can ascertain with great precision the date of their spiritual birth—they can describe most minutely all the circumstances which accompanied, and which, to their own satisfaction, verify the change—they are continually recurring to the fact of their conversion, sometimes with self-complacency, and sometimes, it is to be feared, in a spirit of indolence and satisfaction inconsistent with all religious improvement. Now, my friends, though the principles of religion are of importance, because they are fundamental, yet the principles of religion are but the alphabet of the system. The doctrine of justification by faith is important, rather from the grand truths with which it stands connected, than when viewed in its own insulated state. The great design of the New Testament—of the epistles that were written for our instruction and admonition, and of the promises which are given to excite Christian diligence, is to make the man of God perfect, and thoroughly to furnish or qualify him for every good word and for every good work. What is the value of what we know in religion, except in as far as it is preparatory to what remains to be learned? What is the value of the attainments already secured in religion, except in as far as they may be stepping-stones to future attainments? "Not as though I had already attained," was the spirit of the Apostle, such his ardent solicitude to make future and larger advances in religion—"Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect; but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus."

We are, then, to "leave the principles of the doctrine of Christ"—we are to "go on unto perfection." Must I, then, *secondly*, SPEND A FEW MOMENTS IN EXPLAINING THE EXHORTATION, AND THEN PRESS THE WHOLE ON YOUR SERIOUS ATTENTION? —"Let us go on unto perfection." What is this perfection towards which we are continually to make progress? The term here refers, perhaps, rather to doctrine—to Christian knowledge, than to Christian experience or practice; but then, of course,

knowledge is only of importance as it is connected with holiness, and as it is connected with practice; and we may take the term, therefore, without committing any error, in its common and largest acceptation. What, then, is this perfection towards which we are to be continually making advances? Suppose I could not describe it, or suppose I were to decline doing so—what then? Suppose one acquainted with the alphabet of religion only were to decline attempting any explicit representation of the perfection of the scheme—what then? We prefer taking some scriptural statements, which will be found to place the subject the most unobjectionably before us, and then to offer a few remarks by way of guarding the doctrine. Would you, then, have a scriptural representation of that perfection towards which we are to go on? then take it in the prayer of the Apostle for the Ephesian churches—"For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God." Go on till you understand all the parts of that comprehensive and sublime prayer—till you have spiritual ideas corresponding to all the expressions in it, and till your religious state represent and embody the whole of them. There is the perfection of faith—there is the perfection of love—there is described the fulness of the Christian character.

Would you take a more brief and summary view of the same state? then you shall have it in the words of the Apostle John—that simple and yet sublime writer—"God is love, and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him!" Or, will you take a view of the same state from another expression of the same Apostle? What is the evidence—are you asking—by which we may know that our love, the leading and cardinal grace of the Christian character, has attained to its maturity—what is the evidence by which its maturity is distinguished? "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear; because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love." "Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as he is so are we in this world." Brethren, I confess, unhesitatingly, that if I abstain from making any comment upon expressions like these, it is because I feel satisfied that no terms I could employ could render them more clear in

their meaning, and that to substitute any others in their place would be only to "darken counsel by words without knowledge."

Will you allow me to say a word or two by way of caution here, and of direction there? Are you then ready to say that many of these expressions describe a state of which it is extremely difficult to form an adequate conception? Let me make one remark. In going on "unto perfection," we are not to be solicitous that doctrinal clearness should precede, and be independent upon, an experimental acquaintance with the truth. Religion is a subject, from beginning to end, to be experimentally understood. Clear views depend much more on fidelity to the grace and knowledge we profess than they do upon any thing else; and we must not always expect, while we are climbing, while we are endeavoring to reach the summit above us, to be able, till we reach it, clearly to command the whole of that prospect which the summit itself will give to us. If the descriptions given to us of its scenery are, in some respects, difficult to be understood; and if we would have clear views, let us use all diligence in the ascent, and the higher we reach the clearer will be our views, and the more extensive the prospect we command.

Let us "go on unto perfection." Do you ask—how? By fidelity to the light and the grace we possess, and by the prayerful submission of our hearts to the teaching of the Holy Ghost. Let us "go on unto perfection!" How? Diligently, daily, continually! Let us "go on unto perfection," and beware, that we do not, with regard to this great doctrine of our holy religion, take our standard of it from the experience and views of others—we must take our standard of it, exclusively, from the representations of holy scripture. In the methods by which God the Holy Ghost conducts Christians to the knowledge of his will and to the enjoyment of conformity to him, there is an almost endless diversity; and though religious biography is extremely serviceable, from the general principles which it establishes, it becomes injurious to us when we propose the experience of others, as the certain standard by which our own progress and attainments are to be regulated. It is an evil which has a tendency to generate an artificial character in religion, inconsistent with that beautiful variety which obtains alike in the productions of grace and in the works of nature. And we are sometimes disposed to think that, in this way, some sincere inquirers after holiness prescribe to the Almighty a path by which he shall conduct them, which does not leave the Holy Spirit to work as he will; forgetting, that as "the wind bloweth where it listeth," so the Holy Spirit, in working upon the human mind, acts by laws of which he does not

give any account unto us, and which are not, in respect of their applications, always uniform.

Let us "go on unto perfection;" and let us take care not to confound a part of religion with the whole, nor to substitute one Christian grace for the whole Christian character. We sometimes think this is a mistake which we are in danger of committing. In describing Christian perfection, the sacred writers do, indeed, sometimes select one special grace to illustrate the character of the saint. They select often the grace of love; and they describe Christian perfection by the maturity of love; and they tell us, as the proof, that love is mature, that "it casteth out fear." But, then, the maturity of love supposes and depends upon the maturity of other graces besides love; and if we confine our views exclusively to this, we may be liable to mistake in sentiment and in practice too. In order to Christian perfection, maturity in knowledge as well as maturity in love is to be sought. It implies the perfection of our faith—the perfection of our hope, as well as the perfection of our charity.

Once more, let us remember, in going on unto Christian perfection, that the terms employed here, and by other sacred writers, have a definite meaning, and describe a state to be attained in the present world. Do the sacred writers exhort us to mortify the deeds of the body? They assure us, also, that the flesh, with its affections and lusts, may be crucified and slain. They do not exhort us to a warfare of the successful issue of which there is no prospect. Do they exhort us to "go on unto perfection?" They use the term "perfection" in a definite and in an explicit sense, to describe a state actually attainable in the present life; and with reference to which, we may have as clear views and as satisfactory experience as we have in regard to the principles of the doctrine of Christ. We understand what we mean, when we apply the term "perfection" to vegetable productions. Vegetable productions are perfect when they have reached their proper size—when they possess all their qualities in a perfect state: there is a law beyond which it cannot pass. We know what we mean, when we speak of the perfection of the human nature. When we speak of the maturity and manhood of a rational being, we attach precise ideas to the expression. What the characters of the understanding of a man, as distinguished from the understanding of a child, are, is not difficult for us to ascertain; and though the maturity of manhood does not preclude improvement, yet it does designate a precise and explicit state. Now, so it is with regard to the Christian: we are to "go on unto perfection"—unto the perfection of our faith—until the eye of our faith is purified from every darkening and

obscuring film—is vigorous and clear in its perceptions, and the discoveries made to it are constantly and incessantly enlarging. As to the faculty of understanding, also, we are to seek to be men. We are to go on to perfection of love—and love is perfect when it absorbs all the powers of the spirit, fixing them upon God—when it excludes every contrary propensity, and when we love the Lord our God with all our heart and soul and mind and strength, and our neighbor as ourselves. But with regard to all those subjects, it is the privilege of the Christian—and there we leave the matter—to seek and to have the constant teaching of the Holy Spirit—that "unction from the Holy One" which will make every matter plain to him, as far as present duty renders it desirable; and therefore, above all things, a spirit of docility and prayer should be inculcated upon us in all our religious pursuits.

I proceed, lastly, in a very few words, to enforce upon you the exhortation of the text—"Leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection." And how shall I enforce the exhortation? I will enforce it, first, by reminding you that *your safety depends upon your obedience to the admonition of the text.* If you would not be forsaken by first principles, you must leave them; if you would not make a retrograde movement in religion, you must seek to advance. The only term upon which you retain the possession of that which you now enjoy, is, that you profit by the talents intrusted to you, and set them out to proper use. Indolence is the first step towards declension; spiritual declension will be followed by apostasy, provided we persevere in it; and the only security against final apostasy, against the total abandonment of our religious creed, and the entire loss of our enjoyments, is in Christian diligence. The history of every backslider will illustrate this remark, and the awful possibility of backsliding, finally and fatally, should impress it upon us. It is awfully possible, not only that an individual may lose the cheering sense of the Divine favor, but that he may doubt the reality of his past experience; that, from doubting the reality of his past experience, he may go on to question the truth of all spiritual religion; that he may treat the whole as visionary and enthusiastic; and that, to use the strong language of the Apostle Peter, he may "forget that he was purged from his former sins"—that the sense which memory retains, or might retain, of past enjoyments, is so totally obliterated, that no trace remains, no intellectual perception of spiritual things; and in the utter void and darkness of a spirit, thus abandoned by the light and comforts of the Holy Ghost, scepticism, unbelief, take up their abode, and the last estate of that man will often become much

worse than the first! With regard to faith in Divine things, it has in it very much the quality of a moral virtue. That faith which Christianity requires, is not necessarily produced by the force of evidence addressed to the understanding; it depends very much upon the state of the affections, and resides in the heart, viewed on the whole, as much as it does, or perhaps more than it does, in the understanding; and unfaithfulness to religious light and enjoyments, will very frequently conduct us to speculative infidelity. Now, our safety depends on our Christian diligence; and if we do not desire, if we do not wish to lose entirely the mental perception and the satisfying conviction of first principles, let us leave them, and "go on unto perfection."

Must I enforce upon you the exhortation of the text? Then I will do it, secondly, by reminding you that *the value of all your past attainments depends upon the application which you make of them to future possessions.* You believe in the Son of God—on what does the value of faith depend? It depends on the interest which it gives you in the sacrifice and intercession of Christ—it depends on the union which it establishes between you and the Son of God. And upon what does the value of that interest depend? and why is that union with the Son of God to be prized? Why, because that relation to the Son of God will conduct you to the possession of Divine nature and into the enjoyment of conformity to the Son of God. Now, to detach faith from the great end of it—to separate the knowledge we have acquired of principles from the important truths to which they are intended to conduct, is to deprive them altogether of their value. You admit the importance of prayer—you have often felt the consolations which it imparts; in trouble it has been to you a place of refuge, and in weakness it has been your strength—you know a way to the throne of grace. On what does the value of that knowledge depend? You have put into your hands a privilege, which, if rightly exercised and improved, may command all the blessings of the new covenant. You have learned to pray that you may "pray without ceasing"—you have had the mental eye of faith opened, that there may be spread before it all the wonders of spiritual sight here, and, finally, all the surpassing glories of the beatific vision hereafter—you have tasted the sweets of communion with God, that you may be excited to aspire after more intimate and uninterrupted fellowship with him—you have felt the powers of the world to come, that you may be encouraged to go on till you are made perfectly meet for the inheritance of the saints in light! Of what value is an acquaintance with the alphabet of Christianity, unless we make an application of this knowledge to further attainments in it?